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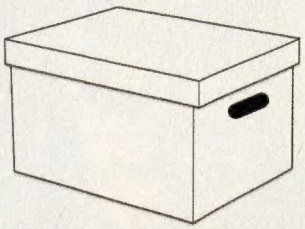

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Issue
#1625
February 2007

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This issue's cover is by
MARC SPARACIO
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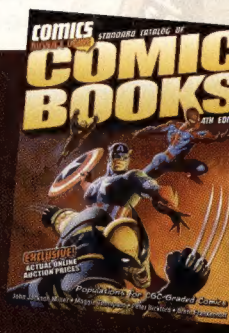

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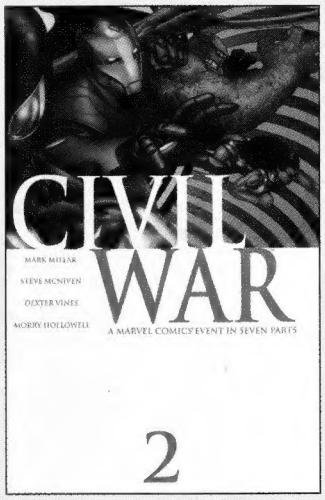

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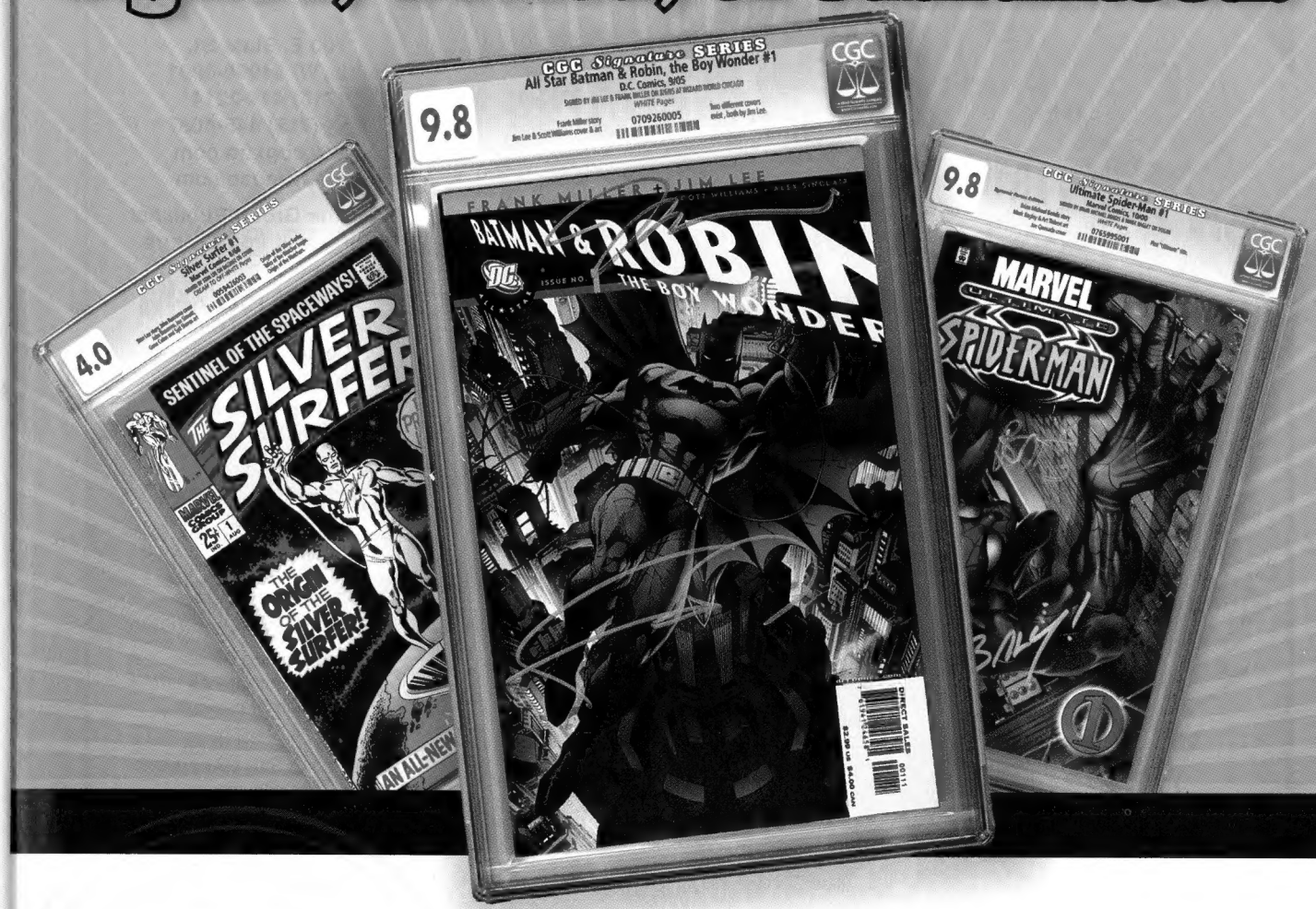

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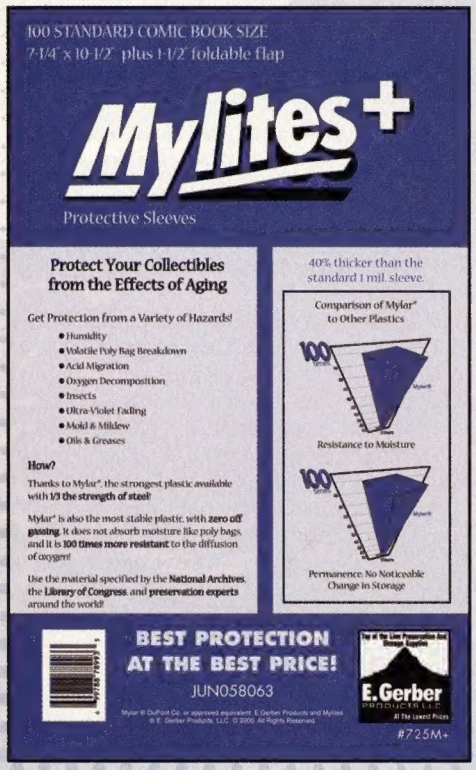
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GUIDEFILE

JEFF POZORSKI & NORMA JEAN FOCHS

NAME: Jeff Pozorski
JOB: Associate Group Publisher — F+W Publications, involved in the following magazines: *Comics Buyer's Guide, Comics & Games Retailer, Scrye, Toy Shop, Toy Cars & Models, Goldmine, Big Reel, Sports Collectors Digest, Tuff Stuff, Fantasy Sports,* and *Card Trade*
PREVIOUS LIVES: Newspaper circulation manager, many years ago.
FIRST COMIC BOOK: *Archie* — some time in the mid-'70s
FIRST *CBG*: Not sure, but sometime earlier this decade, in 2000.
COMICS NOW READING: None! I have two kids involved in football, basketball, soccer, swimming, band, and pottery. They keep me busy!
AND WITHOUT PICTURES: *Good to Great* by Jim Collins and *Don't Flinch* by Barry Alvarez
THAT AND A BUCK WILL GET YOU: Into the Friday night high-school football game
ESCAPES FROM COMICS: See above — kids
BRUSHES WITH GREATNESS: Saw George Bush Sr. once during his visit to Wisconsin, just three days before he lost the election.

NAME: Norma Jean Fochs (aka "Marilyn" to Mr. Cole.)
JOB: Associate Publisher — F+W Publications, involved in the following magazines: *Comics Buyer's Guide, Comics & Games Retailer, Scrye, Toy Shop, Toy Cars & Models, Goldmine, Big Reel, Sports Collectors Digest, Tuff Stuff, Fantasy Sports,* and *Card Trade.*
PREVIOUS LIVES: Miss Teen USA Pageant contestant, 4-H reporter, Olympic card and Sarah Coventry door-to-door sales, nursing home volunteer, fast food worker, factory worker, retail sales, photo stringer for *The Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel* and Associated Press, magician's assistant, catalog and independent television commercial model and actress, cocktail waitress/bartender, public relations manager for a car dealership, animal sanctuary volunteer, *etc.* Concurrent life as a portrait photographer. Prior to moving to Associate Publisher, was Ad Manager for Pop Culture division, covering ***CBG***, *Comics & Games Retailer, Scrye, Toy Shop, Toy Cars & Models, Goldmine,* and *Big Reel.*
FIRST COMIC BOOK: Actually I used to use the *Looney Tunes* comics to pick up the images on my Silly Putty. The first story I remember had Sylvester trying to retrieve something through a sewer grate with bubble gum and a string.
FIRST *CBG*: #1340 (July 23, 1999)
COMICS NOW READING: I read nothing regularly, but put a dog in the story and I'm there.
AND WITHOUT PICTURES: They make books without pictures?
THAT AND A BUCK WILL GET YOU: $1
ESCAPES FROM COMICS: It's not the comics I need to escape from. I'll let you draw your own conclusions.
BRUSHES WITH GREATNESS: I saw *Monk*'s Tony Shalhoub in the airport in Green Bay as I was trying to fly out to San Diego this year. I have seen hunky daytime heartthrob Peter Reckell (Bo from *Days of Our Lives*) in person twice. The usual Comic-Con International: San Diego suspects including the timeless Stan Lee, Kevin Smith, Lou Ferrigno, and many miscellaneous celebrities there to sign autographs. Maggie introduced me to Frank Miller at WonderCon years ago, which is kind of cool to think of as he gets "famouser and famouser." Then there's football legend Fuzzy Thurston who hangs out at nearby Clearwater Harbor in the summer — we've seen him several times. Oh, and David Arquette actually spoke to me at Comic-Con this year.

JANUARY 2007

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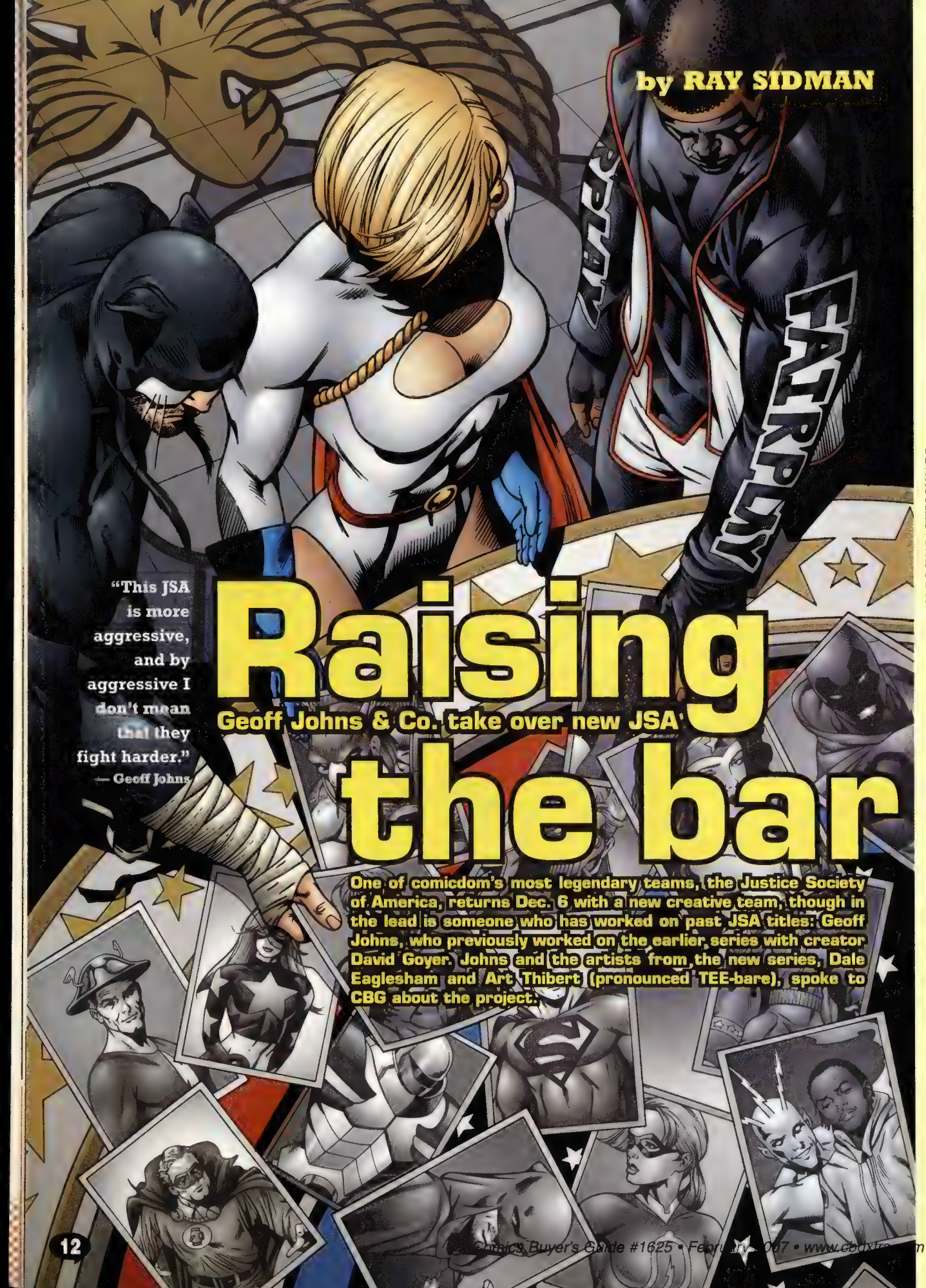

by RAY SIDMAN

Raising the bar

Geoff Johns & Co. take over new JSA

"This JSA is more aggressive, and by aggressive I don't mean that they fight harder."
— Geoff Johns

One of comicdom's most legendary teams, the Justice Society of America, returns Dec. 6 with a new creative team, though in the lead is someone who has worked on past JSA titles: Geoff Johns, who previously worked on the earlier series with creator David Goyer. Johns and the artists from the new series, Dale Eaglesham and Art Thibert (pronounced TEE-bare), spoke to CBG about the project.

ALL DC CHARACTERS ©2006 DC

What sets this incarnation of the team apart from prior ones? Johns answered, "This JSA is more aggressive, and by aggressive I don't mean that they fight harder. It's more aggressive in terms of expanding the scope and taking the name 'Society' to heart. The motto is, 'The world needs better good guys,' and that's what the JSA is here for: they're all about trying to be a moral compass, and we're focusing more on character. It's going to be *a lot* more character-driven."

The roster will also be a bit different, holding a few surprises. ***[Spoiler Warning]*** Johns described it as an "expanded roster." Among those absent are Hawkman, who will join in the near future, and Shakeem Thunder, who will eventually join, but not soon. "Sandman is out there doing his thing," commented Johns, who also said more characters will show up rostered in the first few issues, along with a couple of characters not revealed yet "that I'm very excited about — one is kind of new and the other will be very familiar to a lot of people."

Yet some things remain the same, according to Eaglesham. "I'm struck by how the book has maintained the same feel over the years. That Golden Age heart of the JSA pulses through whoever takes on this title."

Taking on the title also comes with certain expectations, at least from the creative perspective. "It's really exhilarating yet daunting, too," said Eaglesham. "There is a lot of history to this title, and I'm aware of it as I draw the pages. Every artist wants to leave their mark on the projects they work on and contribute to the lore of that particular group or character, and I'm no different. The challenge to the artist is not to reshape the JSA, but to capture its majesty and be a part of its legacy that way."

This time, expectations seem higher for the book. "One of the goals is to really make it one of the cornerstones of the DC universe, make *JSA* that gateway to the next age," stated Johns. "JSA to me is my favorite team in the DC universe. It's my favorite book to write and the characters are really special to me." He said that artist and writer Alex Ross has also been working on the book's development. "He's been a great sounding board."

"We worked really hard to give everyone a specific role and place in the JSA. Despite being around since the 1940s, a lot of them just haven't had a lot of screen time." When asked why, Johns answers, "I don't know. They've been around a long time. It's hard to imagine there wasn't a JSA book for decades." He then said the only reason the last series was ended was to get this series to launch at same time as the relaunched *JLA*. "Now, I think the DC universe is always going to publish a JSA book, which is great."

When asked if the series would incorporate obscure details or events from prior JSA history, Johns replied, "They're not so obscure, I can tell you that much. At the end of the first issue, you kind of get a peek

"The JSA to me embodies what the DC universe is best known for: an ever-evolving and growing super-hero universe."
— Geoff Johns

"The JSA is about legacies ... and during our run we're going to explore the internal team dynamics those relationships stir up."
— Dale Eaglesham

at where it's gonna go. The stuff the characters are going to be weaved into is pretty major."

Johns and Ross have also worked on #5 and #6, which will be a Justice League crossover. "This will be the first official monthly crossover," said Johns, adding that while the two teams have met in graphic novels and elsewhere, they've not crossed paths in the monthly books.

When asked the classic question of JSA vs. JLA, Johns replied, "I love the JLA. The greatest thing about JSA is that nobody on the team has his own book (though Hawkgirl does, but she's not yet on the team). JSA lets the underdogs shine a little bit.

"The JSA to me embodies what the DC universe is best known for: an ever-evolving and growing super-hero universe."

Eaglesham also commented on what the team means to him. "The JSA is about legacies, and so there are close relationships among the members, and during our run we're going to explore the internal team dynamics those relationships stir up. There's more at stake in a battle when team members are family and that is going to result in more complex situations. There's an incredibly rich tapestry of characters and relationships in this team and this is something that will be fascinating for me to delve into."

After seeing a recent preview, fans have been wondering what's going on with Jesse Chambers, the new Liberty Belle. Turns out she's married and that her husband is a member of the new JSA. Johns told ***CBG*** that her spouse is Rick Tyler, aka the second Hourman, who she married during the "One Year Later" jump. "We planted a lot of hints that they were digging each other a little bit. They're both very much extroverts, they love what they do, they charge right in together. Their relationship will be one of the core relationships in the JSA."

With a new person wearing the Liberty Belle helm, there could well be other character changes also. Johns commented that Jesse has super-strength and that other super-powers would become apparent as the series continues.

"We're trying to push each of these characters. Every member of the JSA's personali-

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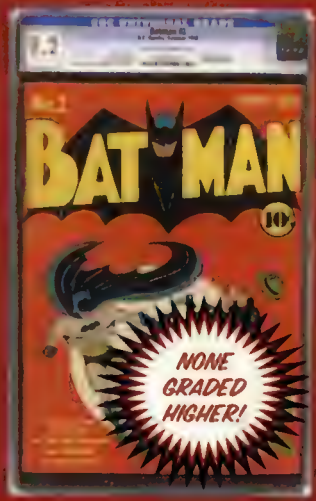

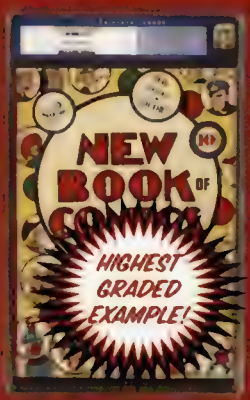

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"The motto is, 'The world needs better good guys,' and that's what the JSA is here for: they're all about trying to be a moral compass."
— Geoff Johns

ties are being pushed to the forefront, and part of what the pairing does is create a new husband-wife team on the team, which is all about family anyway."

Among the favorites for the *JSA* creators, Wildcat and Power Girl were popular choices cited by both Johns and Thibert. Johns additionally said Stargirl, Starman, and a new character: Cyclone.

As for a long-term creative team, that remains to be seen. Johns said he'll be on board for at least the first 18 issues, which will take the series through mid-2008, and Thibert said he'd stay on "as long as they'll have me." Eaglesham, however, took a cautious and more humble approach to the question. "Modern comics are constantly in flux, and change is the natural order now. I could finish my career drawing this one title, but long runs on books are far less likely these days. I'm drawing the JSA and I hope I can live up to the legacy. As I gaze into the JSA, I feel the JSA gazing back, telling me that 'how long' is laughably presumptuous of me. It's the JSA that will decide when it's time for me to go."

Three creators

Geoff Johns, Dale Eaglesham, and Art Thibert have all been in the comics industry for many years. Those interested in more information on them can visit their websites:

- Johns: *www.geoffjohns.com*
- Thibert: *www.hackshackstudios.com*

And information about Eaglesham's work can be found at a variety of sites, though he has no official website.

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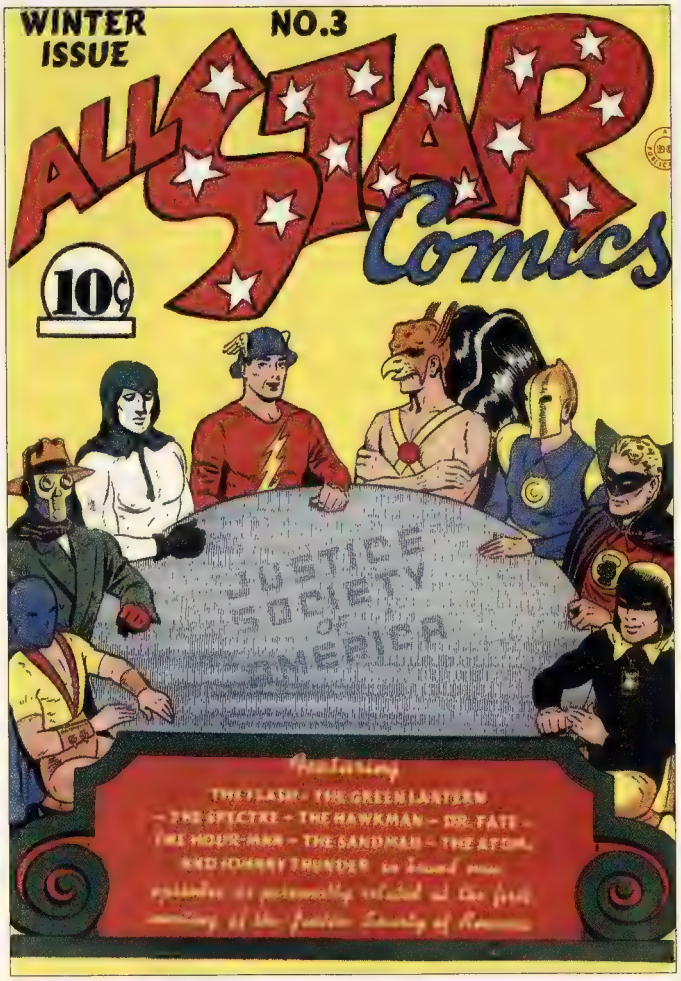
Dust off your Golden Age knowledge

The Captain's JSA quiz

by ANDREW "CAPTAIN COMICS" SMITH

Now that you've read the lead article in this magazine (and if you haven't, you should), you are now undoubtedly an expert on The Justice Society of America. So let's see how much you've learned ... with The Captain's Old-Fashioned, Star-Spangled, Greatest-Generation, Golden Age JSA Trivia Quiz. There's nothing modern here, so pull out those back issues, trade paperbacks, *Showcases*, *Archives*, and aging brain cells — and let's get to work!



What was historically significant about* All-Star Comics *#3 (Win 40)?

1. When *All-Star Comics* #3 made its debut in Winter 1940, it contained:
   A. The first appearance of The JSA.
   B. The first comic-book super-team.
   C. The first inter-company crossover.
   D. All of the above.

2. Which of the following characters who appeared in one or both of the first two issues of *All-Star Comics* eventually joined The Justice Society?
   A. Biff Branson
   B. Johnny Thunder
   C. Red, White, and Blue
   D. Ultra-Man

3. **True or false:** The original Red Tornado, Ma Hunkel, joined The Justice Society in the Golden Age.

4. Green Lantern, Flash, Wildcat, and Mr. Terrific replaced Spectre, Sandman, Starman, and Doctor Fate in various places in *All-Star* #24-26 (Spr-Win 45), because:
   A. Spectre, Sandman, Starman, and Doctor Fate were losing their solo strips in *Adventure Comics* and *More Fun Comics*.
   B. Green Lantern and Flash were needed to boost sales.
   C. Spectre, Doctor Fate, and Starman made the team too powerful.
   D. While the public was largely unaware of it, Spectre, Sandman, Starman, and Doctor Fate belonged to a different company.

5. Hawkman appeared in all 55 Golden Age JSA adventures — in fact, he appeared in all 57 issues of the Golden Age *All-Star* run, including the first two anthology issues. Which character had the second-most appearances in The JSA?
   A. The Atom
   B. Wonder Woman
   C. Johnny Thunder
   D. Doctor Mid-Nite

6. After *All-Star Comics* #46 (May 49), only one regularly appearing JSA member still had a regular berth outside of *All-Star* itself. It was:
A. Green Lantern
B. Wonder Woman
C. Flash
D. Black Canary

7. In *All-Star* #45 (Mar 49), The JSA's headquarters was suddenly, and with no explanation, located in Civic City. Prior to that, it had always been in:
A. New York
B. Washington, D.C.
C. Metropolis
D. Gotham City

8. Who of the following never wrote for *All-Star Comics* #3-57?
A. Robert Kanigher
B. Roy Thomas
C. John Broome
D. Gardner Fox

9. Who of the following never drew for *All-Star Comics* #3-57?
A. Joe Kubert
B. Alex Toth
C. Jack Kirby
D. Jack Cole

10. The Justice Society's origin was first told in:
A. 1940
B. 1951
C. 1977
D. Never

Bonus Silver Age question!
Johnny Thunder made his Silver Age debut in:
A. "Flash of Two Worlds," *Flash* #123 (Sep 61)
B. "Double Danger on Earth!" *Flash* #129 (Jun 62)
C. "Vengeance of the Immortal Villain!" *Flash* #137 (Jun 63)
D. "Crisis on Earth-One!" and "Crisis on Earth-Two!" *Justice League of America* #21-22 (Aug-Sep 63)

Johnny Thunder (above, lower right) figures prominently in several questions in this quiz. When did he make his Silver Age debut?

ANSWERS

1: D. Whenever the venerable "All of the above" appears, you know it's a pretty safe bet.

For the record, it's widely known that *All-Star* #3 was the first appearance of The Justice Society of America, the first two issues of *All-Star* being simply an anthology book with many of the same characters. And most people know that The JSA was the comics industry's first super-team.

But it still surprises me how many people *don't* know that *All-Star* featured characters from what were then two different companies — "sister" companies, to be sure, but different companies, nonetheless.

By 1940, the comics line owned by Harry Donenfeld and Jack Liebowitz was called Detective Comics Inc. (or sometimes National Allied Publications) and included *Action Comics, Superman, Detective Comics, Batman, More Fun Comics, Adventure Comics*, and two annual issues of *New York World's Fair* (which would morph into *World's Finest Comics*).

But Donenfeld had an investment in another company — All-American Comics, which he co-owned with M.C. Gaines. AA published two super-hero anthologies in 1940, *All-American Comics* (naturally) and *Flash Comics*.

AA and DC, through mutual agreement, shared house ads, distribution, and the DC-Superman "bullet" logo. But they were, in fact, separate companies. So, when *All-Star Comics* #3 contained a single story that combined Flash, Hawkman, Green Lantern, and Atom (from AA's two anthology titles) and The Spectre, Doctor Fate, Sandman, and "Hour-Man" (from DC's *More Fun* and *Adventure Comics*), it was — ta-daa! — the first inter-company crossover.

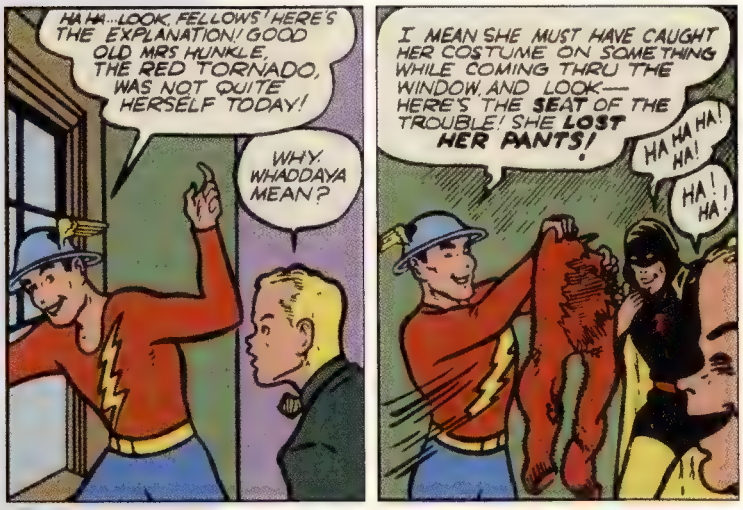
2: B. Although they appeared in the first three JSA adventures, Johnny and his Thunderbolt didn't join officially until *All-Star* #6 (Aug-Sep 41), taking the place of The Flash. The Wizard of Whiz had become an honorary member (like Batman and Superman), because he'd graduated to his own solo title — *All-Flash Comics*, appropriately — and the purpose of *All-Star Comics* was to spotlight characters who hadn't yet become popular enough for their own titles. (Green Lantern would follow suit the following issue.)

The two-fisted Biff and the peculiar Ultra-Man didn't make it past the first issue of *All-Star*, whereas Red, White, and Blue appeared in both but were simply servicemen, not super-heroes.

While she later became the JSA's housekeeper, Ma Hunkle's Golden Age career included a foray as the first Red Tornado, complete with long underwear and an inverted saucepan for a helmet.

3: False. While it's popular in fan circles to think Ma's cameo in *All-Star* #3 conferred membership, DC has consistently maintained that it didn't. It's been stated in-story in a number of places, but one of the most recent was when Alan Scott said unequivocally in *JSA Secret Files* #1 (Aug 99), "She wasn't a member of The JSA, but she was one of the first female heroes." Murray R. Ward's *The Illustrated Index to All-Star Comics* also says she wasn't a member. And Roy Thomas says so in the *All-Star Companion* Vol. 1 (TwoMorrows Publishing, 2000), and who's gonna argue with *him?*

4: D. If you've already read the answer to Question #1, then you might have guessed this one.


HA HA...LOOK, FELLOWS! HERE'S THE EXPLANATION! GOOD OLD MRS HUNKLE, THE RED TORNADO, WAS NOT QUITE HERSELF TODAY!
WHY, WHADDAYA MEAN?
I MEAN SHE MUST HAVE CAUGHT HER COSTUME ON SOMETHING WHILE COMING THRU THE WINDOW AND LOOK— HERE'S THE SEAT OF THE TROUBLE! SHE LOST HER PANTS!
HA HA HA! HA!
HA! HA!

Not only were All-American Comics and Detective Comics Inc. different companies in the Golden Age, but in 1945 M.C. Gaines showed just how separate they could be. According to the *All-Star Companion*, it's believed Gaines wasn't getting along with the new partner that co-owner Harry Donenfeld had brought in for All-American: Jack Liebowitz, Donenfeld's partner in DC Inc. So Gaines took his marbles — and *All-Star Comics*, which he published — and went home.

For the nine months it took for the quarterly *All-Star* #24-26 to be published, All-American and DC Inc. were, if not divorced, at least having a trial separation. For those three issues, *All-Star* was completely an All-American Comics production, and even the DC "bullet" was removed from the covers in favor of an AA logo.

Which meant that Gaines couldn't use any DC heroes for *All-Star*, which is why Spectre and Doctor Fate (from *More Fun Comics*) and Sandman and Starman (from *Adventure Comics*) couldn't appear. In fact, it's evident that Starman was supposed to be featured in *All-Star* #26 but was redrawn as Green Lantern — because, in one panel, The Emerald Gladiator is toting Ted Knight's Gravity Rod!

There was another sea change by #27: Gaines had sold out to Donenfeld and Liebowitz. After that, DC characters could appear willy-nilly with All-American characters in *All-Star*, because by late 1945 they were *all* DC characters!

ACCORDING TO THE RADIO FLASH, THOSE ROBOTS ARE AT THE UTE PLANT, EATING THE MAGNESIUM STORED THERE!
IF THEY DO THAT, IT'LL THROW ALL THE PEOPLE IN THE VALLEY OUT OF WORK!

DC continued listing All-American as the publisher until #32, but the DC-Superman bullet began again on the cover with #27.

Gaines went on to found some line called E.C. Comics. I wonder what became of that?

5: A. Yup, The Mighty Mite comes in at #2, with 53 appearances. He didn't appear in #27 (apparently replaced by Wildcat) or #36 (Batman).

6: B. The Amazing Amazon not only continued her *Sensation Comics* spot into 1950, but the *Wonder Woman* title itself continued uninterrupted (mostly) into the '80s. *Flash Comics* #104 (Feb 49) gave us the final solo Golden Age adventures of The Flash, Hawkman, Atom, and Black Canary. *Green Lantern* #38 (May 49) was the final issue of that title and, therefore, Alan Scott's final solo story in the Golden Age — and, to add insult to injury, it starred Streak the Wonder Dog on the cover instead of The Emerald Gladiator!

Superman and Batman both continued in a variety of titles after *All-Star* #46, of course, but neither were significant members of The JSA.

They were never more than honorary members and only appeared in two issues: #7 (in cameo) and #36.

7: D. Yup, Gotham City, DC's most popular town. Batman and the Golden Age Green Lantern also lived in towns called Gotham City. Perhaps they weren't the same ones, though, since "Gotham" is a nickname for New York in the real world and, perhaps, other places in the Golden Age DC universe, as well. But Gotham City as the original shared home for Batman, Alan Scott, and The JSA has become canon in modern comics.

8: B. JSA co-creator Gardner Fox (of *Justice League of America* fame) was the primary scripter through #34, with help from Kanigher (*Sgt. Rock*, "Haunted Tank") and others; then, after a few transition issues, John Broome (Silver Age *Green Lantern*) wrote every issue from #39-57.

Thomas, of course, wrote plenty of JSA stories in the 1980s as DC's "Earth-2 editor," but that was long after the Golden Age run of *All-Star* had ended.

9: D. Kubert was an *All-Star* all-star, primarily on Hawkman but pitching in elsewhere. Toth contributed a few chapters here and there, and even King Kirby got in on the act while he and Joe Simon were doing the Sandman strip in *Adventure*.

Cole, who spent more than a decade on Plastic Man and other Quality Comics strips, never worked for DC that I'm aware of.

10: C. It's true: The JSA never had an origin in the Golden Age.

That story had to wait until *DC Special* #29 (Aug-Sep 77), "The Untold Origin of The Justice Society," by Paul Levitz, Joe Staton, and Bob Layton. Set in World War II on Earth-2, a prequel to *All-Star Comics* #3, it featured 10 heroes (Batman, Flash, Green Lantern, Doctor Fate, Hourman, Sandman, Hawkman, The Atom, The Spectre, and Superman) battling an invasion of England by Hitler — aided by Teutonic Valkyries summoned by the Spear of Destiny — and a long-range Nazi bomber capable of reaching Washington D.C. When the heroes — primarily The Atom — prevented the death of Franklin Roosevelt, he suggested they band together as The Justice Society.

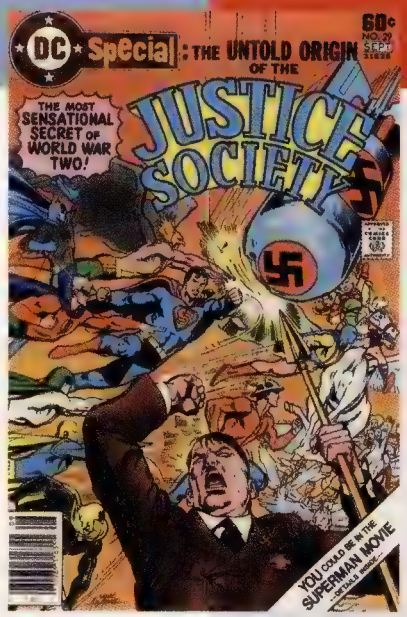
Scoring

9-11: You must be The Spectre, with such otherworldly knowledge.
6-8: You shed your light over ignorance, for ignorant things cannot stand the light of the Green Lantern!
3-5: Let's call you Black Canary, since you're obviously a late-bloomer.
0-2: Cei, U must be Johnny Thunder!

Of course, this origin couldn't withstand the events of *Crisis on Infinite Earths*, which un-invented Earth-2 and made any use of Superman, Wonder Woman, Green Arrow, Aquaman, Robin, and Batman in World War II *verboten*. Roy Thomas, who ultimately wrote six JSA-related series that spanned the '80s, wrote "Secret Origin of the Justice Society" in *Secret Origins* #31 (Oct 88), which updated the Levitz story by deleting Superman and Batman.

Neither of which has anything to do with the Spear of Destiny story in early issues of *All-Star Squadron* in 1981. Apparently having learned more about the Spear since his *DC Special* days, Hitler found he could control heroes whose powers were fueled by magic or heroes who were particularly susceptible to magic, if they came within the Spear's sphere of influence. Written by Thomas, this story had a twofold purpose. For one thing, it explained why The JSA didn't simply win World War II single-handedly on Dec. 8, 1941, since their most powerful members (Superman, Green Lantern, Wonder Woman, Doctor Fate, The Spectre, and Johnny Thunder's Thunderbolt) would be taken over by the Spear if they set foot in Nazi-controlled territory. (The Japanese had some similar mystical artifact that served the same purpose.) As a bonus, it allowed Thomas to focus on such minor characters as Firebrand, Liberty Belle, and Johnny Quick in *All-Star Squadron*, rather than the over-exposed Big Guns.

Bonus: C. "Flash of Two Worlds!" gave us Jay Garrick and Earth-2, and "Double Danger on Earth!" showed the Earth-2 Wonder Woman, Atom, Green Lantern, Hawkman, Doctor Mid-Nite, and Black Canary. But it wasn't until "Vengeance of the Immortal Villain!" that we saw Johnny, along with a second tantalizing glimpse of Wonder Woman, Green Lantern, Atom, Doctor Mid-Nite, and Hawkman. Doctor Fate and Hourman made their Silver Age debuts in the first Crisis in *Justice League of America* #21-22. Starman and others had to wait for later stories.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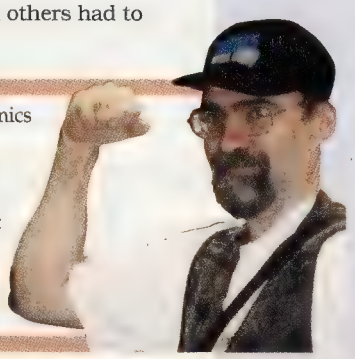
More than 35 years after the team's first appearance, The Justice Society of America's origin was revealed in* DC Special *#29 (Sep 77). The story has been reprinted in a DC digest and in the recently released* Justice Society *trade paperback.

Author of the syndicated comics column "Captain Comics", **ANDREW SMITH** has written more than 200 *CBG* columns. Check out his message board at **www.captaincomics.us**, or send your questions to him at **capncomics@aol.com**!



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My 15 minutes with Stan Lee

Face front, true believers!

Normally in an interview, I begin with a brief introduction to the subject's career, in case the reader is unfamiliar with the creator or only knows the work and not the name. But do I really have to do that with *Stan Lee*?

by ANDREW "CAPTAIN COMICS" SMITH

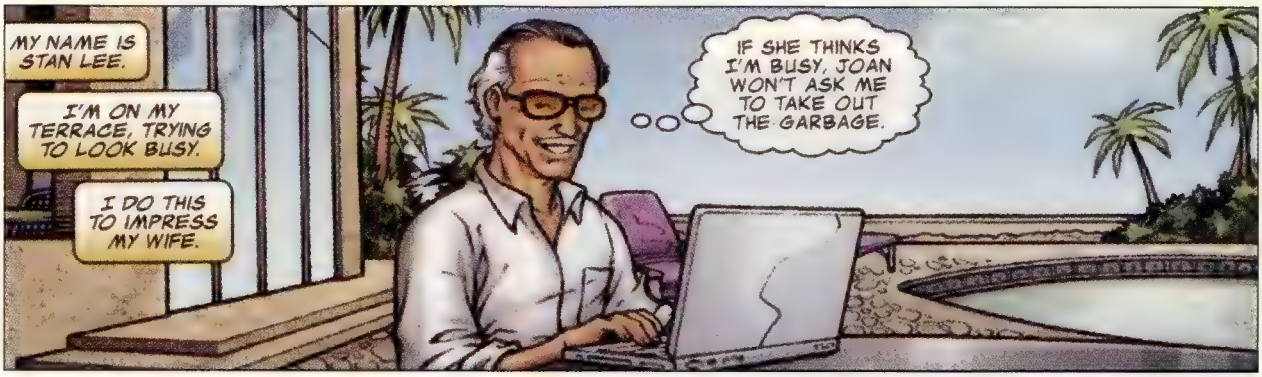
This is a guy who is hitting his 65th year in association with Marvel Comics, from today's blockbuster movies (in which he often has a cameo), back unto the Marvel universe's founding and the brand's christening in 1961; back unto the '50s, when Marvel was Atlas, its pages bursting with big monsters; and, yea, brothers and sisters, back unto 1941, when a world was aflame with war, and what would eventually become Marvel Comics was just a-borning, and human torches and sub-mariners and star-spangled sentinels flew, swam, and swung through the pages of Timely Comics, the Ur-Marvel. And in each of these eras, Stan Lee left his stamp, most notably the swingin' '60s of The Silver Age, wherein Lee co-created, edited, and scripted the major characters who populate the Marvel universe, and wherein Lee's face, "voice," and spirit infused the "Marvel Age of Comics."

This is a guy who today is still rocketing along with POW! Entertainment, a multi-media company. Such TV shows as *Stripperella*, *Lightspeed*, and *Who Wants to Be a Superhero?*; and, yes, still more comics, from the "Stan Lee Meets ..." series currently coming out from Marvel, to *Who Wants to Be a Superhero?* comic book from Dark Horse.

No, I don't think I have to give Stan "The Man" Lee any introduction. So let's skip that. If there's anybody out there who doesn't know who Stan Lee is by now, he or she is reading the wrong magazine.

So, given who he is, when you're offered an interview with Stan Lee, you don't say, "No." Even if they tell you it's only for 15 minutes and supposedly about a specific topic.

That topic was the Oct. 3 release of the *X-Men: The Last Stand* DVD. Which we did talk about. But I took the opportunity to indulge my fanboy enthusiasm and ask a bit more from my hero (mostly about current


MY NAME IS STAN LEE.
I'M ON MY TERRACE, TRYING TO LOOK BUSY.
I DO THIS TO IMPRESS MY WIFE.
IF SHE THINKS I'M BUSY, JOAN WON'T ASK ME TO TAKE OUT THE GARBAGE.

projects, since I've read so many Stan Lee interviews about the '60s stuff that I can recite his likely responses from memory). Go read the sidebar for the background on that; then come back here for the interview.

Back, already? Oh, one more thing. For those of you who will never have the privilege of meeting Stan Lee in person, I'm here to tell you that he's just as you'd expect from countless Bullpen Bulletins, letters pages, lectures, forewords, interviews, and the like. Boundlessly energetic, Lee exhibited throughout the interview the mock hyperbole and self-deprecating humor for which he's well known. And, yes, he is charming enough to sell ice to the Inuit.

Enough from me. Let's hear from The Man.

CBG: *Mr. Lee, it's an honor talking to you, sir!*

Stan Lee: It's an honor to be talked to! And please call me Stan.

CBG: *I'll try. And I wish I had time to say more, but they tell me that I've only got 15 minutes!*

Lee: I'll try to talk fast, if you wish …

CBG: *First question: Whose idea was it to do a comic book with the* **X-Men: The Last Stand** *DVD, and how did that come about?*

Lee: I guess it was the people at the DVD company or at Marvel — it wasn't my idea. But I think it's a great idea. I love it, and I love the comic book. Have you seen it?

CBG: *Ah, um … No.*

Lee: Well, shame on you! *[laughs]*

(Captain's Note: This interview took place before the DVD was on sale. In other words, it's not my fault! But after the interview the publicist overnighted a copy to me, so I wouldn't continue working in the dark. For those who haven't seen it, see sidebar.)

Lee: It has three stories, old X-Men stories, which are three of my favorites — they asked me to select three that I'd like to see republished. But then it has an original X-Men story that I wrote, and I think you'll find it's like nothing you've seen before. I didn't want to do the same type of thing, so I tried to make it a funny story, while still keeping everything in character. I'm really proud of it — I think it belongs in a magazine like *Mad*.

CBG: *All I know is the title:* ***X-Men: The Unlikely Saga of Xavier, Magneto and Stan.***

Lee: I don't know how the Hell my name got last, but these things happen. *[both laugh]*

CBG: *I'll bet you could fix that, if you wanted to. I suspect you've got the clout.*

Lee: Too late, it's been printed! *[more laughter]*

CBG: *Any hints about the three reprints?*

Lee: The cover says "Featuring an all-new, never-before-released X-Men story by Stan Lee plus Stan's three favorite classic X-Men stories!" The cover practically gives it all away.

CBG: *Yeah, so why buy it when we already know what it's all about?*

Lee: You gotta buy it to read my funny story! *[both laugh]*

CBG: *It sounds a lot like the* ***Stan Lee Meets …*** *series currently coming out from Marvel. How does this book differ from those?*

Lee: They're similar in a way, because I tried to make the Marvel books funny, too. But it's different because all the stories are totally different.

CBG: *Are you a character in this book, the way you are in* ***Stan Lee Meets …****?*

Lee: A character? I'm like the *lead* character! *[laughs]* Let me put it this way: The book features Xavier, Magneto, and me. The three of us are involved in the story.

CBG: *You really should have gotten first billing.*

Lee: Well, you know how it goes. These guys — I'm not as temperamental. Magneto, you don't want to get him mad at you.

CBG: *You've also got the* ***Who Wants to Be a Superhero?*** *comic book coming out from Dark Horse in October.*

Lee: Boy, you know more about me than I do! *[laughs]*

CBG: *Well, I saw the show, and I wanted to ask you: Did you write about the real Feedback (****Spoiler Warning:*** *Winner of the contest) or create your own guy out of whole cloth?*

Lee: I created my own guy, but I based him

In addition to picking three of his favorite X-Men stories for inclusion in a reprint volume for a special edition of the* X3: The Last Stand *DVD, Lee also wrote a new story featuring — who else? — himself, Prof. Xavier, and Magneto.

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I NEVER REALIZED YOU HAD SUCH PROBLEMS
THAT'S ONLY PART OF IT!
WHAT ABOUT MY INCANTATIONS?
WHAT ABOUT THEM?
"EVERY FOE I BATTLE REQUIRES A DIFFERENT CHANT.
"I CAN'T JUST SAY 'TAKE A POWDER, CHARLIE!'
"I'VE GOTTA SCARE 'EM WITH MUMBO-JUMBO."
BY THE ROVING RINGS OF RAGGADORR, I'LL NAIL YOUR CARCASS TO THE FLOOR!
"FACE IT, STAN, I'VE GOT MILLIONS OF THEM!"
"I KNOW, I WROTE 'EM."
BY THE CRIMSON SANDS OF CITEROX, I'M REALLY GONNA CLEAN YOUR CLOCK!

***Above:** Marvel's series of* **Stan Lee Meets** *... one-shots feature Stan interacting with his creations.*

on the real Feedback. So it's 50-50. I had to make a few changes in order to make him a typical comic-book super-hero, but I kept to the real Feedback as much as I could. It was a lot of fun.

***CBG:** That's an awful lot of books coming out in a short period of time.*

Lee: Yeah, for a guy who sorta stopped writing comics!

***CBG:** So I hear! [both laugh]*

Lee: It seems every time I turn around, somebody gives me a new assignment. And I must admit, I love doing it.

***CBG:** Maybe it's the anniversary thing. Is it true that this is your 65th year in association with Marvel?*

Lee: I guess so. I'm not much at math, but, if they say it is, I'm sure they figured it all out to the minute.

***CBG:** That can't be true, as neither of us is over 30.*

Lee: *[laughs]* I'm a little over 30. As Jack Benny always used to say, I'm 39.

CBG:** Getting back to the* ***X-Men *DVD, you've written before in lots of places that you had no idea in the early '60s that these characters would last as long as they did ...*

Lee: Right.

CBG:** ... At what point did you begin to think X-Men — or* ***any *Marvel characters — might have a shot at the big screen?*

Lee: Well, I think it was when some producers started calling us and asking for the rights to the movies. I didn't need a house to fall on me! *[laughs]*

It first started, gee, I guess in the '80s. In fact, we had given the rights to somebody, a company called Cannon Films. We foolishly gave them the rights to do Spider-Man. Somehow, they weren't able; they weren't the kind of company that could do Spider-Man in a big way, the way it should have been done. And they never really did it but they had the rights and they had the licensing and merchandising rights and they had sold things in advance. And because of that, even though many of the bigger studios, the major studios, wanted to do Spider-Man, they couldn't do it, because Cannon had these rights that were sewn up. And that's the reason it took so long for Spider-Man to hit the big screen. There must have been millions of dollars spent on lawyers trying to untangle those rights and finally get to the point where Marvel could just make a deal with Sony.

***CBG:** What a tangled web.*

Lee: Yeah — hey, very good! *I'm* supposed to say the clever things! That's OK, you'll say that I said it. *[both laugh]*

CBG:** Right, I'll attribute to Stan the Man. To "Mr. The Man." [both laugh] You seemed to be having fun doing the* ***Superhero *show for The Sci-Fi Channel ...*

Lee: Oh, yeah, that was a lot of fun.

***CBG:** ... except when you had to eliminate contestants. Was that as hard for you as it looked?*

Lee: It was terrible. Because it meant so much to these people. And to have to say to someone — I was sorry that had to be my line, "Turn in your costume." I wish I could have said something like, "Hey, you did a great job, and I feel kinda bad, but better luck next time." But *[stentorian voice]* "Turn in your costume" — I think they were trying to make me sound like Donald Trump.

***CBG:** But this was the opposite of a Donald Trump kind of show. You were emphasizing the positive qualities of the contestants, instead of the usual backstabbing found on reality shows.*

Lee: We tried to. And the amazing thing is, our contestants all became incredibly friendly with each other. You know, it wasn't the kind of rivalry where they would have killed each other for a chance to win. They were supporting each other, helping each other, and they were genuinely unhappy when one of them would be cashiered out.

***CBG:** It was really refreshing. And it was easy to imagine, watching the show, a super-team of these characters, instead of a single winner.*

Lee: I had mentioned to somebody later, "Maybe we ought to do something like The Avengers or The Justice League." Put them all together at some future date.

CBG: *Maybe in a second season? Any word on that?*

Lee: You never know. You never know.

CBG: *We've talked about* ***Who Wants to Be a Superhero****, and* ***Stan Lee Meets ...*** *and the* ***X-Men*** *DVD. What other projects do you have coming up that we should know about?*

Lee: Well, I have a little company called POW! Entertainment. And I'm sure you've already figured out that POW! stands for "Purveyors of Wonder!"

CBG: *[cough] Yes, um, that was my first guess. [both laugh]*

Lee: And we're working on new movies and television shows and DVDs. You know, it's original things that I'm creating now. Boy, I've never had more fun. I've never been busier but I've never enjoyed myself more. I'm able to do exactly what I want to do.

CBG: *What should we look for next?*

Lee: Well, let's see. We have a movie in development at Paramount. We have another movie — you know, the terrible thing is there are a few things we're doing I'm not allowed to mention, because the movie studios want to make the first announcement. We have a television series that's in development at Lifetime, but I don't think I can say any more about that. We have a couple of animated DVDs that'll be coming out soon. Starz is going to be releasing them. Y'-know, Starz used to be IDT, and then IDT sold to Starz — I don't know what the arrangement was, but now they're Starz. One of them is called *El Condor*, The Condor. It's the first with a Hispanic super-hero, a teen-age Hispanic super-hero, that I'm kinda excited about. And we have another called *Mosaic*, about a female heroine, a teenager. So both of those will be out shortly as DVDs.

We're working on a DVD with Ringo Starr, featuring Ringo as a super-hero. I felt it's about time Ringo got the recognition that he deserved. *[both chuckle]* And we're developing something with Hugh Hefner, called *Hef's Super-Bunnies*. Again, the world thinks of Hef as a guy who's just interested in wine, women, and song. But I felt it was my duty to let the world know the *real* Hugh Hefner, who's spending every minute doing his best to save the human race from all the ills that plague us.

CBG: *I've always assumed that was the real story. [both laugh]*

Lee: Then, we're doing a lot of things with

At the 2006 Comic-Con International: San Diego, Comics Guaranty held a benefit signing at its booth for ACTOR (A Commitment To Our Roots, now Hero Initiative) with Stan.

telephones. We call them "mobisodes," mobile-phone episodes, and we have some cartoons and some other things that will be coming out shortly that you'll be able to watch on your telephone. The main thing is, we're trying to arrange it that no matter where you go, what you do, you won't be able to get away from me! *[both laugh]*

CBG: *Speaking of which, that speech that Feedback gave in the last episode of* ***Who Wants to Be a Superhero?****, where he explained how you'd influenced his early life and basically shaped his moral paradigm by the stories you wrote — I was kinda moving my lips at the same time with him, in synch. That story was shared by a lot of us. And I wondered if you had any idea that you had that kind of influence over so many generations of Americans.*

Lee: Well, people have mentioned that to me over the years, and I can't tell you what a gratifying feeling that is. At the time I was writing these stories, I was just trying to make a living and hoping the books would sell, so I wouldn't get fired, I'd be able to pay the rent. And then years later, to meet people who say that they were a big influence on their lives ... so many people have said that those comics helped them with school, with reading, that they didn't like to read and they probably wouldn't have become readers except that they were reading our stories, and they had a great vocabulary in them, and their grades in English picked up after reading our books. Y'know, the funny thing is, even though they were comics for kids I always tried to use a college-level vocabulary when I wrote the stories. I felt, if there's a word they don't understand, they'll either get it through its use in the sentence by osmosis — or, if they have to go to a dictionary and look it up, that's not the worst thing in the world that could happen. And so many people have told me later on that the vocabulary, the language in the stories, had meant a lot to them. I can't tell you how good that makes me feel now.

CBG: *You can count me among those people, because, as a pre-schooler, I learned to read from Stan Lee and Jack Kirby's* ***Fantastic Four****. And when I got to first grade, my teachers were astonished at my vocabulary — although they were a little concerned that I kept yelling, "It's clobbering time!" on the playground.*

Lee: *[hearty laugh]* You know, I used to love expressions, like "face front," "hang loose," "excelsior," "clobbering time," " 'Nuff said." People would remember them and use them, and it made the whole thing kinda intimate and friendly, like we're all talking our own private language.

CBG: *As a kid, I felt as if I was a member of an exclusive club when I read Marvel Comics.*

Lee: That was the idea. And you're a great human being for saying that. *[both laugh]*

CBG: *I learned more than vocabulary from Marvel Comics. You also referenced the* ***Bible*** *and Shakespeare and used a great many expressions that taught many of us fans what those things were and where they came from.*

Lee: That's because I had read those things and I had been so impressed by them that, when I was writing those stories, they would come to mind, and I figured, "Why not quote them? Let some other people get the benefit and enjoyment of this."

The Ubiquitous Uber-writer

At the time of this interview, Stan Lee was involved in three projects that I asked him about. Here's the background:

• On Oct. 3, Fox Home Entertainment released *X-Men: The Last Stand*, the third X-movie, in three DVD formats: a "regular" edition, as part of a set of all three films, and as a "Special Collector's Edition." All three versions included the usual features and Easter eggs we've come to associate with DVD releases, including three alternate endings (letting you know where some characters ended up), a great many deleted scenes (that, to this reviewer, helped plug a few holes in the plot), and a ton of audio commentary.

But, in addition, the "Special Collector's Edition" included a 100-page digest-sized comic book called *X-Men: The Unlikely Saga of Xavier, Magneto and Stan*. It included three reprints selected by Lee, as well as a fourth story, also called "The Unlikely Saga of Xavier, Magneto and Stan."

The reprints are *The X-Men* #1 (Sep 63), the first appearance of the team and Magneto; *The X-Men* #4 (Mar 64), the first appearance of The Brotherhood of Evil Mutants; and *The X-Men* #9 (Jan 65), the first appearance of alien foe Lucifer and guest-starring The Avengers. In the new story, Lee wrote a tale in which he meets Magneto and Xavier, who don't appear to like him very much but do ask an unusual favor. It's drawn by a who's who of Marvel artists, including Ron Lim, Ron Frenz, Leinil Yu, John Romita Jr., and Howard Chaykin.

• In a similar vein, Lee wrote five light-hearted *Stan Lee Meets* ... one-shots for Marvel, wherein he meets characters with which he is associated. Beginning with *Stan Lee Meets Spider-Man* in September, the series continued with Doctor Strange, The Thing, and Doctor Doom, before wrapping up with *Stan Lee Meets Silver Surfer*. Each book was 48 pages for $3.99 and included a classic reprint and all-new back-ups, in addition to the lead story.

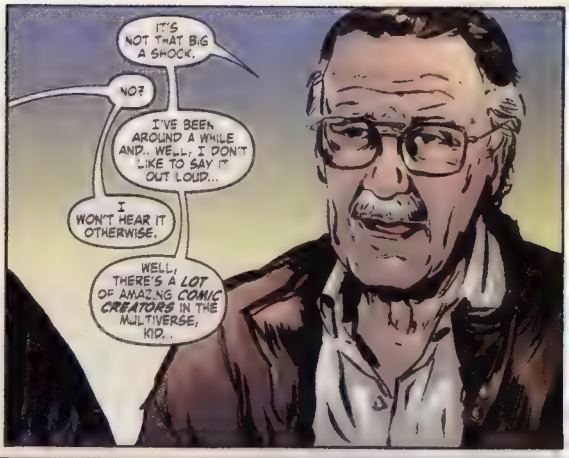
• *Who Wants to Be a Superhero?* was a six-episode "reality" show that was co-produced by Lee's POW! Entertainment with The Man himself as host and judge. Airing on The Sci-Fi Channel in July and August, the series featured 11 contestants competing to avoid elimination and be the last hero standing. The winner was to star in an original Sci-Fi Channel movie (yet to be filmed) and in a Stan Lee-written comic book that was published by Dark Horse in October.

Spoiler Warning: The competition was won by "Feedback," aka 34-year-old Matthew Atherton, a software engineer and sometime actor.

The funny thing is, though, that in those days, in the beginning, in the '40s and '50s — nobody had any respect for comics. In fact, I used to be embarrassed to say that I was working in comics. People felt, "Well, why would anybody read a comic book? You should read a novel; you don't want to look at pictures with the words." And years later I began to realize that comics are really a good way to tell a story. There's nothing wrong with the medium. And it would almost be like saying, "You should read a Shakespearean play, but you shouldn't go to see it on the stage, because you shouldn't have to look at the actors. Or you should read a novel and not go see the movie." Comics are simply a story with illustrations to look at to make it a little bit more fun when you read it, and it just depends on how well they're drawn and how well they're written.

In fact, one example I used to give was, if Shakespeare and Michelangelo were alive today, and they decided to collaborate on a comic book — Shakespeare would write it, Michelangelo would draw it — would anybody say that isn't a worthwhile thing to read or to look at?

I sound like I'm on a pulpit. I don't know how I got into that! *[laughs]*


IT'S NOT THAT BIG A SHOCK.
NO?
I'VE BEEN AROUND A WHILE AND.. WELL, I DON'T LIKE TO SAY IT OUT LOUD...
I WON'T HEAR IT OTHERWISE.
WELL, THERE'S A LOT OF AMAZING COMIC CREATORS IN THE MULTIVERSE, KID..

CBG: *Well, I agree with you, and I'll be running this interview in a lot of places where other people think the same.*

Lee: I finally found a guy who can make me famous! *[laughs]*

And with that, my 15 minutes were up. All I had time to add was:

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NO BROKEN DOWN SHACK

by **RAY SIDMAN**

What kind of person would name their publishing studio after a word meaning "broken-down house or shack"? Meet Nick Schley and Adam Frizzell, co-founders of **Abaraya Studios** (*www.abarayastudios.com*), whose name comes from a Japanese word meaning exactly that. "Sounded just about right," said Frizzell with a laugh.

Frizzell, Schley, and company Director of Marketing Anthony Zicari spoke to ***CBG*** about the studio, which has been around for nearly two years and whose titles include *Outlaw Scorn: 3030AD*. The series launched in October with #2 due in December.

Though the pair started Abaraya in 2005, their experience in comics dates back much further. Schley explained it as, "Adam and myself had been kicking around this idea for a company — a 'for us by us' kinda deal. We launched Abaraya Studios LLC in early 2005, and we haven't looked back since."

Schley said he remembers looking through comic books at age 5; Frizzell said that he began reading comics in the fourth grade. "I got hooked on *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* and *Spider-Man*," he said, adding that he recalled that when he was young, his brother received an *X-Men: X-Babies* anthology by Art Adams — "I think I stole that from him every other day." Frizzell then followed that with a subscription to *Amazing Spider-Man* and collected *Wolverine* and Mark Bagley-illustrated comics. Schley said he owned a large collection of *Avengers* and Spider-Man comics that he "thumbed through daily." He began reading comics in earnest as a teen.

Nowadays, Frizzell said he reads anything by J. Scott Campbell, Frank Miller, and Chris Bachalo, among others, and his favorite all-time series is *Steampunk*, created by Bachalo in 2000. Schley concurred, citing *Steampunk* as "quite possibly the greatest book ever published," and calling Frank Miller "a complete genius," adding that he's especially fond of the *Sin City* books.

Regarding Abaraya, the two have plans for at least a couple new series. *Abiding Perdition* and *Cleaners* are in the works, both written

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by Schley. Abaraya's *Abiding Perdition* is actually be the second mini-series, with the first volume published by Markosia earlier this year. The second volume, *Dawn of the Spider*, is a six-issue fantasy/adventure series, said Schley. "The fans of the first series will not be disappointed. Ever since the conclusion in early 2006, I've had nothing but tons of e-mails asking when the next installment will come about. And believe you, me, we are working on it." He added that he expects it out in 2007, with art by Filipe Aguiar. Zicari added, "This one picks up right where the last series ended, and should not be missed."

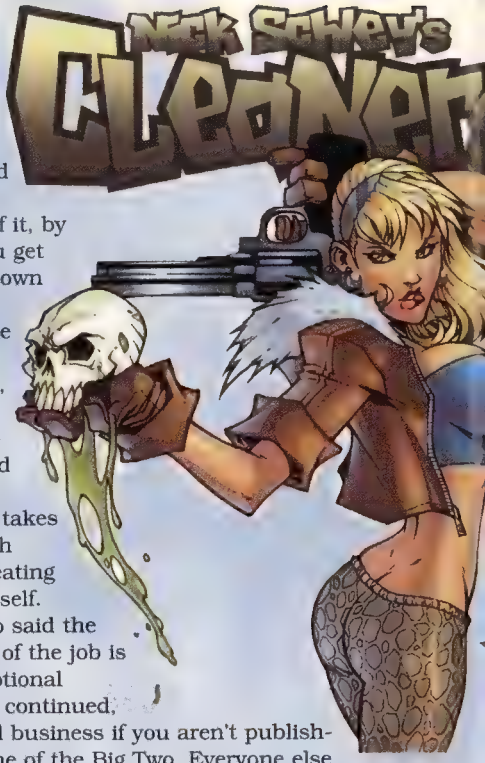
Schley said *Cleaners* is a three-issue action, horror, and adventure series. Frizzell further described it as "sort of a *Ghostbusters* sort of thing, but more fun — all very Saturday morning cartoonish." It follows a group of tweeners who respond to monster distress calls such as zombies, Dracula, Frankenstein, *etc.*

Other projects include the Frizzell-illustrated *Redemption's Bane*, written by Jay and Mark Pechello with paints by Tutzuke Iwanama. "Probably the most serious and darkest story we've got in the works at the moment — kinda like *The Punisher* but in a little more *Final Fantasy* sort of world." Schley also mentioned three other titles: *Slug*, "a science-fiction sleeper based on a enlightening short story by Tim Armentrout; *Convergence*, "a conspiracy laced adventure"; and *Quick & The Dead*, "a psychological Western comedic drama."

"We try to cover the spectrum," said Schley, "and create comics we would read and have some fun with creating comic books."

For now, there's *Outlaw Scorn*, written by Schley, who also does the art along with Frizzell and colors by Dash Martin. Frizzell commented on the story, "It's set in the distant future, which is overrun by mutated men and animals — basically *Mad Max* and everything in one book." The protagonist, Scorn, is out to relocate her crew and "along the way gets caught up in a revolution, the new civil war, and this whole political structure that she has no interest in; the whole world is constantly in upheaval."

Considering self-publishing, both commented on the pros and cons of such an endeavor. Frizzell said that the best part of it, by far, is: "You get to do your own book." In contrast, he said the other work, including promotional work and organizing everything takes up as much time as creating the book itself. Schley also said the worst part of the job is "the promotional wheel." He continued, "It's a hard business if you aren't publishing with one of the Big Two. Everyone else on the ladder has to scratch and claw for every inch.



"So what you have is a lot of indie publishers going under every week, and if that wasn't bad enough, the true fallout is consumer confidence. The retailers are completely skeptical on trying out a new property for the simple fact of: Will it be here next month? And if it does come in next month, will it be on time, *etc.* It's a very tough cycle that can make you want to get out of the business, and fast."

However, he said it's all worth it to have a creator-owned work. "At the end of the day, all that aforementioned bad stuff doesn't make a difference when you hold in your hands a comic book that you created, and it makes all those bad thoughts just fade away.

"That lasts for about one day each and every time. Then you know it's time to do it all over again. If the numbers were down last month, it's time to make them better someway, somehow. If the numbers were sweet last month, it's time to make them better someway, somehow."

That's where Zicari comes in. He told ***CBG***, "My role within the company is to direct and oversee the marketing of the books and help to get them coverage. It's all about being seen and making a mark. Creating a buzz, so to speak. That's half the battle."

Zicari also considered the self-publishing milieu. "You have the freedom to get your product out there to the masses and remain true to it within yourself. You don't have to compromise your vision for anyone else. It is a very fulfilling thing as a creator.

"Regarding the worst part: It's tough, very tough. But you just have to stay strong and persevere, remain dedicated, and never give up. It's worth it when you see the finished product and you hear the praise from the readers and the industry. It's very vindicating."

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52

J.G. Jones

Images ©2006 DC Comics

"I think this'll be one of those books we'll look back on 10 years from now and remember it changed a lot of things, the ways characters and stories are approached."
— J.G. Jones

by **RAY SIDMAN**

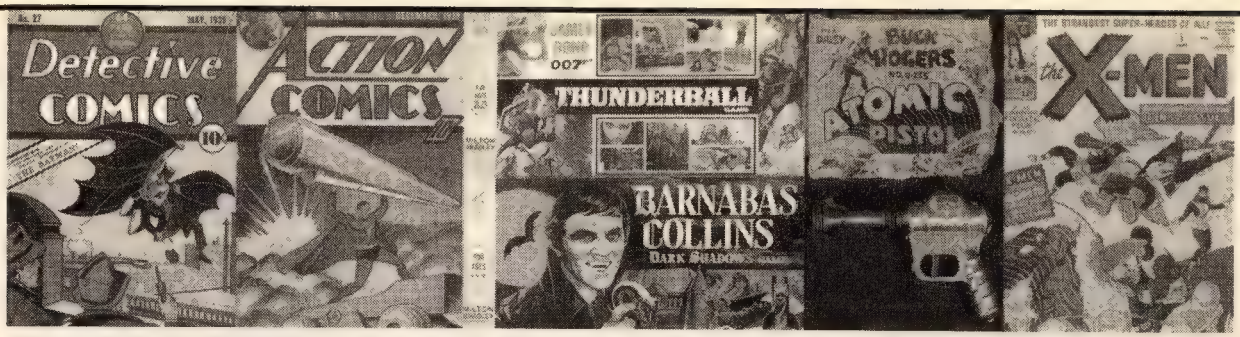
*CBG: What's your involvement in **52**?*
J.G. Jones: "I am *52*'s cover artist, what Dan DiDio calls the face of the book. I guess what he wanted me for was — there's no way a single artist can draw every issue of this book for a year, they were going to have to use a lot of different interior artists — and they wanted one cover artist to keep the book consistent. I guess I was the only guy out there out of work, so I got the call. I was just finishing up my *Wonder Woman* run and had just come off the *Villains United* covers, and I was lucky enough to get the call."

CBG: Who's your favorite character in this series?
Jones: "Favorite character or favorite character to draw? I think that my favorite character to draw so far has been Black Adam. It's funny because I never really liked the Marvel Family characters at all. I always thought they were kind of lame when I was growing up, and well, really, truly, even as an adult. But the way Black Adam has been treated — such as, they put him in JSA — I find him an intriguing character and I love the costume, and I love to draw him because he's just such a bastard. He's the DC equivalent of Namor, who I always used to love to draw as a kid. There's something about that regal-power-take-no-guff from anybody kind of attitude."

CBG: What's your favorite event in this series?
Jones: "Oh, there's so much. For me, it's not the biggest moment of the story, but I enjoyed The Great 10. I liked bringing those new characters in that you haven't seen before in the DC universe, and I especially enjoyed doing the design work on them. So I get a little double-dip there."

*CBG: Considering epic DC events past and present, how pivotal is **52** to the history of the DC universe?*
Jones: "I think it's going to be fairly pivotal. Dan initially had set out to do *52* to sort of tie up a lot of loose ends in the DC universe, to clear up some things about not only continuity, but also how magic works in the DC universe and set the rules for how time travel stories work and things like that because there were just too many variants and everybody was doing their own take and there didn't seem to be any consistency, too many contradictions. We'll see how long the writers actually stick to it, but the plan was to build some new parameters. I think this'll be one of those books we'll look back on 10 years from now and remember it changed a lot of things, the ways characters and stories are approached."

*CBG: What do you hope readers get out of **52**?*
Jones: "I hope the readers have a damn good time. I want every week for them to rush to their comic-book store going, 'I gotta see what the latest cover is,' and get their jollies off of what I'm doing as well as enjoying the story and the interior art."



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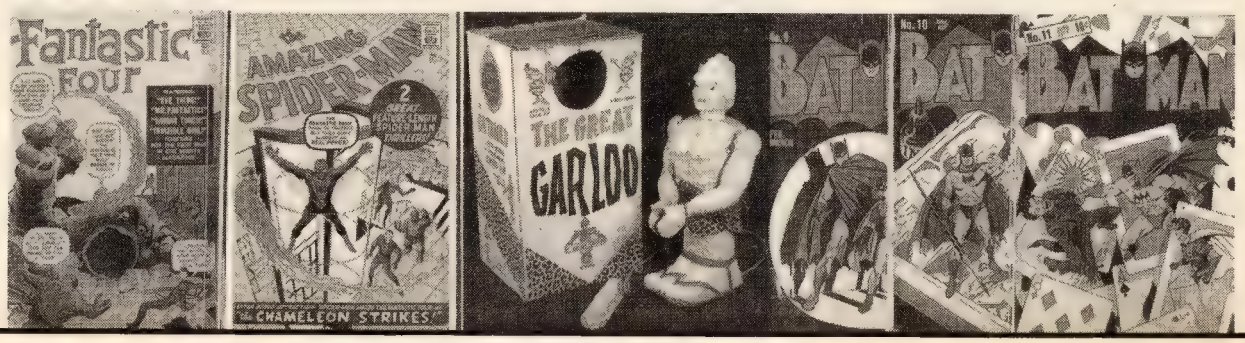


The Blurbs!

by **RAY SIDMAN**

Gaiman leads CCI: San Diego special guests

Comic-Con International (*www.comic-con.org*) has announced its special guest lineup for 2007. The show, running July 26-29 with preview night on July 25, will include some of the industry's biggest names.

Topping the list is award-winning author Neil Gaiman. He will be joined by such writers and artists as:

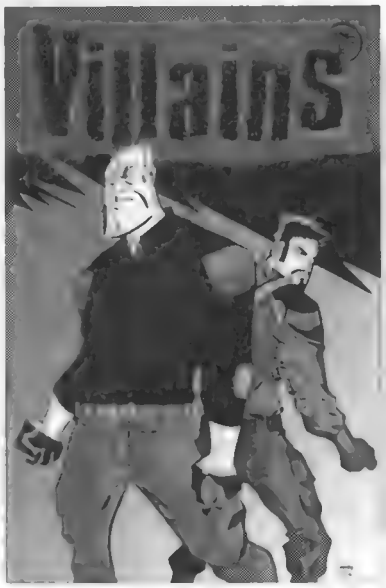
- Adam Hughes
- Joseph Michael Linsner
- Ben Templesmith
- Rick Geary
- Mark Verheiden
- J.H. Williams III
- F. Paul Wilson
- Kent Williams
- Allan Heinberg
- Rowena
- Joann Sfar
- Scott Kurtz
- Alison Bechdel
- Renée French
- George Gladir
- Miriam Katin
- Mel Keefer
- Lily Renee Phillips

Neil Gaiman

Star Trek: TNG comes to IDW

Star Trek: The Next Generation returns to comics with *ST: TNG — The Space Between* #1, due in January from IDW Publishing. The series comes out during the 20th anniversary of the popular television show's debut. The series first appeared in comics through DC Comics.

In terms of continuity, this story includes Tasha Yar, a character (played by Denise Crosby) killed during the first season of the TV series. In *The Space Between*, she, Riker, and Data investigate a mystery on Tigan-7.



Villains trade paperback due in December

Viper Comics will release the trade paperback of its *Villains* limited series in December. The story, originally published in a four-issue series, follows the adventures of a 20-something wanderer who stumbles into a life as a super-villain.

The series was created by Adam Cogen and Ryan Cody. The trade will include a pinup gallery.

Viper President Jesse Garza said, "The response to this book has been outstanding. Fans have been very vocal."

Wood signs exclusive with DC

Writer/artist Brian Wood has signed an exclusive contract with DC Comics. Wood is creator and writer of Vertigo's *DMZ*.

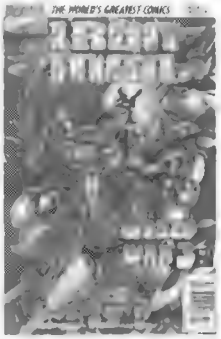
Wood, who received acclaim as a small-press writer, said, "Not only does this give me some extra security after so many years working for the small presses, it's also incredibly flattering to have DC showing this much faith and trust in my talents in such a public and committed way."

DMZ #13 is due out Nov. 8, and the first five issues of the series were recently released in the collected trade paperback *DMZ Vol. 1: On the Ground*.

Terrence Howard to play Tony Stark's pal

By Maggie Thompson

Terrence Howard, nominated for a Best Actor Oscar for his role as Djay in *Hustle & Flow*, has joined the *Iron Man* cast, according to industry reports.



Howard will play Jim "Rhodey" Rhodes, the buddy of Tony Stark, to be played by Robert Downey Jr. Marvel Studios President of Production Kevin Feige is quoted as saying, "When we first began to think about *Iron Man*, we always envisioned Terrence as Rhodey."

The release date for the Marvel film is scheduled as May 2, 2008.

Heroic makes changes in 2007

Heroic Publishing has announced that among its plans for 2007, it will "super size" two of its titles, *Flare Adventures* and *WitchGirls Inc.* Starting with *Flare Adventures* #19 in February and *WitchGirls Inc.* #5 in March, the two will become 52 page anthologies. Publisher Dennis Mallonee said, "What I'm trying to do is some genuine old school here, with anthology titles that will feature several different ongoing series in a variety of styles."

The books will start out as quarterlies, though if sales do well enough, Mallonee plans to make them bimonthly with *Flare Adventures* #20 in May and *WitchGirls* #6 in June.

Flare Adventures — not to be confused with Heroic's bimonthly *Flare* title — will include stories with such characters as Flare, Chrissie Claus, Commander Fantastic and the All Girl Hero League, Raven Gold and the Golden Ravens, and Naomi Battle Squirrel. *WitchGirls* will feature Psyche, Black Enchantress, Britannia, Doctor Arcane, Vanity, and Sergeant Furry and His Teddy Bear Commandoes.

The publisher also announced that Roy Thomas' alternate reality series, *Anthem*, will be an ongoing series starting in January with #4. Artist Benito Gallego will illustrate the bimonthly book.

The series tells the story of a group of super heroes fighting in an alternate United States where the Axis powers are on the verge of winning World War II.

Diggle takes over *Hellblazer*

Writer Andy Diggle will take over as writer on the long running Vertigo title *Hellblazer* with #230, due in stores in March.

Diggle has found success on such Vertigo titles as *The Losers* and *Swamp Thing* (both of which ended this year), and the *Hellblazer* spin-off *Lady Hellblazer*, as well as the mainstream DC universe title *Adam Strange* this last year.

The art team will not change, with Leonardo Manco on interiors and Lee Bermejo illustrating the covers.

New York Comic-Con names new guests

Organizers of the second annual New York Comic Con (*www.nycomiccon.com*) have added a pair of notable names to the show's guest of honor list: J. Michael Straczynski and Marc Silvestri. The pair join other newly named guests Gene Colan, Peter David, Michael Golden, George Pérez, and Kevin Smith.

NYCC Event Director Greg Topalian said, "We couldn't be happier with the enormous talent that has come on board already," adding that many more such announcements would be forthcoming.

The convention is slated for Feb. 23-25, 2007, at the Jacob K. Javits Center in New York City.

Glacial Period highlights December ComicsLit

The latest project from NBM Publishing's ComicsLit line brings four artists' visions of the Louvre to the graphic novel format. Each of the four books is being done with the involvement of the Paris based museum.

The first volume, *Glacial Period*, by Nicolas De Crecy, tells a story set thousands of years from now as the Earth experiences another glacial age, and archaeologists uncover the Louvre.

The 80 page color paperback is due in December and will retail for $14.95.

Marvel heralds the return of White Tiger

Old-school Marvel fans may remember the vigilante known as White Tiger — a Puerto Rican teen named Hector Ayala who derived his powers from a special necklace. That White Tiger is no more, but courtesy of novelist Tamora Pierce and her husband Tim Liebe, the character lives on in the form of Angela del Toro, taken from the pages of Brian Michael Bendis' run on *Daredevil*, now in a self-titled monthly series.

During an Oct. 12 press conference, the co-authors and a host of Marvel executives discussed the ongoing series, which will hit shelves Nov. 15, illustrated by French artist Phil Briones and inked by Don Hillsman. David Mack provides the cover art on #1.

The new White Tiger is a 28-year-old woman with a history in law enforcement, including the FBI. "She's a different person from what [the original White Tiger] was," said Pierce. "His upbringing was somewhat different. The del Toro family has a long history of being police and martial artists."

The pair mentioned cameos in the first arc, including White Queen, Dr. Curt Connors, and Deadpool. When asked what other characters the duo might work into the series, Pierce commented, "Oh, man, we're just trying to survive the first arc."

When asked what about the character appealed to her, Pierce replied that her readers are saying, "'We don't read a lot of comics but we're interested in looking at this one.' Which is extremely gratifying, especially readers who are saying, 'I don't read girl comics, but I'll read this one.' A lot of mine [readers] are saying 'Where is it, where is it, where is it?' They're not that interested in the novel; it's the comic. Comics carry this cachet."

Regarding the question of questionable "protection" when it comes to female super-hero outfits, Pierce, who described herself as a feminist who grew up in the '50s and '60s, said her White Tiger "looks attractive and at the same time she looks practical. I think the fanboys will probably miss the balloon fixation and large portions of bare acreage, but she looks good."

She also praised the artist, Phil Briones, saying "He does actions really well. When he does action, you can hear people moving, see them moving on the page."

More information can be found at Pierce's website, *www.tamora-pierce.com*.

The emergence of comic-book rock

Meet Ray Wall. Wharton MBA grad. Wall Street executive. leader of the Ray Wall band. and crusader and creator of comic book rock music. Wall's latest opus is "The X-Men Song: A Super Hero Rock Opera" — a nine minute suite in several parts featuring a range of musical genres, spoken word, and even a gospel choir.

Wall spoke to ***CBG*** about the project and his history in comics, stating he was not much of an X fan growing up. "When I was a kid, X-Men wasn't the most important comic book. *Spider-Man, Fantastic Four, Incredible Hulk, Iron Man, Sub-Mariner* — these were all titles that I read. My childhood inspiration first came from DC, and then I eventually graduated to Marvel."

The X rock opera is not the first project of this type he has undertaken. Last year, he and his band, The Ray Wall Band, put together a Fantastic Four song around the same time as the big screen movie hit theaters. The band, in fact, came together a mere half year prior to the movie's release, and its sole purpose is to create and play comic book rock.

With the FF tune, Wall submitted the song to Fox Studios, who eventually rejected it. He then made a video, which was also rejected by MTV and similar outlets. However, Wall followed this by putting the video on public television in New York City and Chicago, where he calculated several million saw it. Then, a few weeks after the movie hit theaters, he put the song on Internet music site iTunes, where, according to Wall, "It started to outrank the FF soundtrack, after only a few weeks based on results from the site's Power Search Pages."

Encouraged when he heard about the X-Men film coming out this year — *X-Men 3: The Last Stand* — he asked himself the question, "What would an X-Men song actually be like?" He then utilized his local libraries to track down collection after collection of X-Men comics. "The song kind of drew on me, a lot of images and music started to come to me in my sleep after reading these comics at midnight."

So what is this song? "It was conceived to be, in musical terms, the equivalent of a major super-hero movie experience and it is the most ambitious super-hero song ever recorded." He further described it as a "fairly state-of-the art deep journey into X-Men territory" with multiple musical styles — metal, rock, gospel choir, and hip-hop, joined by special effects, African drums, a speech by Professor X, and the voices of more than a dozen other X-Men characters. "It's quite an amazing undertaking that took not only the band but also other people, and more than 80 hours to record." Wall stated that of the 65 tracks recorded, much of it ended up unused. He considers the sound experimental. "You haven't heard anything like this since the '70s: It's a song sustaining a level of drama, the whole cinematic effect."

Wall said he has used his professional experience to chart the business and product applications of marketing comic book rock. "It's been very interesting, particularly speaking with record labels, which work by categories, and what I'm trying to do doesn't fall into a category. This category isn't really theorized yet." However, he said he has found the companies are intrigued by the notion of this genre, though some of them consider it niche music. "This isn't niche music," he said, citing the success of such comic-book films as the Spider-Man and X-Men movies, as well as the status of Superman films through the years. He said he believes the key demographics for such music — comics fans, gamers, anime fans, and fantasy readers — are largely untapped, and he presents this idea to the record companies.

"There is a market and a place for this kind of music: imagination-based music. Whether it's comic-book, science-fiction, or fantasy, imagination is the common denominator. I feel that in our lifetimes we've seen basically everything that can be done with comic books, but no one can even imagine what is possible when you add music to the equation."

As for future projects, he said he is planning more comic book-based rock songs, and not just of Marvel characters. He also said he could see this expanding into music about popular fantasy or science-fiction realms. In fact, he said, he is working on one inspired by the *Star Trek* universe.

"I feel that over the last 20 years of super-hero films, there's yet to be any new and convincing powerful theme songs that specifically mention the heroes by name, their powers, arch-enemies, what they do. That was just a vacuum in the major super-hero movies, and I wondered why there was not anything out there as strong and powerful as the super-hero theme songs that we all remember as kids."

To order the CD or find out more about the Ray Wall Band, go to *www.myspace.com/raywallband*.

Databank

New comics sales for September 2006

Diamond sales

Top comics *ordered* by retailers

Comics shops ordered more than **6.61 million comic books** from **Diamond Comic Distributors** in August, off 2% from where they were in the same month in 2005. Those comics were worth **$20.44 million**, up 5% from the same month in 2005.

Adding **all** comics, trade paperbacks, and magazines sold by Diamond, the total grows to **$30.81 million**, up 5% from the same month in 2005.

Orders shown below are **estimates:**

	Comic Book	Price	Publisher	Orders
1	Civil War #4	$2.99	Marvel	272,500
2	Justice League of America #2	$2.99	DC	143,400
3	Astonishing X-Men #17	$2.99	Marvel	124,000
4	Amazing Spider-Man #535	$2.99	Marvel	117,000
5	Ultimate Spider-Man #100	$3.99	Marvel	116,200
6	52 #18	$2.50	DC	111,800
7	52 #19	$2.50	DC	111,600
8	52 #20	$2.50	DC	111,100
9	52 #21	$2.50	DC	110,300
10	Wolverine #46	$2.99	Marvel	107,900
11	Civil War Front Line #6	$2.99	Marvel	105,300
12	Wolverine Origins #6	$2.99	Marvel	101,000
13	Ultimates 2 #12	$3.99	Marvel	97,200
14	Civil War X-Men #3	$2.99	Marvel	93,000
15	Batman #657	$2.99	DC	91,300
16	Uncanny X-Men #478	$2.99	Marvel	89,800
17	Captain America #22	$2.99	Marvel	82,200
18	X-Men #191	$2.99	Marvel	82,000
19	Green Lantern #13	$2.99	DC	78,100
20	CW Young Avengers & Runaways #3	$2.99	Marvel	75,500
21	Civil War Files #	$3.99	Marvel	74,700
22	X-Men Phoenix Warsong #1	$2.99	Marvel	71,700
23	Ultimate X-Men #74	$2.99	Marvel	68,900
24	Supergirl #10	$2.99	DC	67,400
25	Flash Fastest Man Alive #4	$2.99	DC	66,700
26	Teen Titans #39	$2.99	DC	66,000
27	Ms Marvel #7	$2.99	Marvel	65,000
28	Moon Knight #5	$2.99	Marvel	64,700
29	Superman #656	$2.99	DC	64,300
30	Detective Comics #823	$2.99	DC	64,200
31	Heroes For Hire #2	$2.99	Marvel	64,000
32	Eternals #4	$3.99	Marvel	64,000
33	Ultimate Fantastic Four #34	$2.99	Marvel	63,400
34	Cable Deadpool #32	$2.99	Marvel	57,800
35	Action Comics #843	$2.99	DC	56,100
36	Daredevil #89	$2.99	Marvel	55,500
37	Sensational Spider-Man #30	$2.99	Marvel	54,500
38	Ghost Rider #3	$2.99	Marvel	54,000
39	Incredible Hulk #98	$2.99	Marvel	53,000
40	Captain America #21	$2.99	Marvel	49,000
41	FN Spider-Man #12	$2.99	Marvel	48,100
42	Green Lantern Corps #4	$2.99	DC	46,600
43	Mystery in Space #1	$3.99	DC	46,600
44	Annihilation #2	$2.99	Marvel	44,500
45	Wetworks #1	$2.99	DC	43,800
46	X-Factor #11	$2.99	Marvel	43,400
47	Ion #6	$2.99	DC	41,800
48	Trials of Shazam #2	$2.99	DC	41,200
49	Secret Six #4	$2.99	DC	40,800
50	X-Men First Class #1	$2.99	Marvel	39,900

Source: *Diamond Comic Distributors, Comics & Games Retailer magazine*

The HEAT-meter

Top comics *sold* by retailers

Whereas the list on the left represents what comic books retailers **ordered and received**, the rankings below represent what retailers **said they sold**, in reports to ***CBG***. While not as exact as order data, this ranking shows those titles that are performing better in shops than their orders would indicate. **DC's *DMZ* #11** for example, came in 120th in orders for the month, but 39th in actual retailer sales.

Some titles listed below actually shipped the previous month but were still being reported as strong sellers.

1	Civil War	26	Ultimate Spider-Man
2	52	27	Eternals
3	Justice League of America	28	Action Comics
4	Astonishing X-Men	29	Green Lantern Corps
5	Amazing Spider-Man	30	Superman
6	Wolverine	31	Mystery in Space
7	Batman	32	Heroes for Hire
8	Wolverine: Origins	33	Supergirl
9	Justice	34	Ultimate X-Men
10	Uncanny X-Men	35	Ghost Rider
11	Civil War: X-Men	36	Ion
12	Civil War: Front Line	37	Trials of Shazam
13	Flash: The Fastest Man Alive	38	Ultimate Fantastic Four
14	Green Lantern	39	DMZ
15	Ultimates 2	40	Cable/Deadpool
16	Teen Titans	41	Green Arrow
17	Detective Comics	42	Secret Six
18	All-Star Superman	43	Nightwing
19	Civil War Files	44	Aquaman
20	Ms. Marvel	45	Superman/Batman
21	CW: YA & Runaways	46	Daredevil
22	X-Men	47	Robin
23	Moon Knight	48	FN Spider-Man
24	Captain America	49	X-Factor
25	X-Men: Phoenix — Warsong	50	Next Wave: Agents of Hate

Source: *Comics & Games Retailer magazine*

The scoreboard

Publisher market shares

The first two tables below break down retailer orders for the Top 300 comics sold by Diamond, exclusive of trade paperbacks.

The table on the right represents the share of all publications Diamond sold, capturing comics not in the Top 300, trade paperbacks, and magazines (whether or not they contain comics).

Share of Top 300 Comics (in units)

Publisher	Share
Marvel	49.04%
DC	38.38%
Image	2.89%
Dark Horse	2.35%
Dynamic	1.57%
IDW	1.45%
Devil's Due	0.79%
Archie	0.48%
Avatar	0.45%
Virgin	0.40%

Share of Top 300 Comics (in dollars)

Publisher	Share
Marvel	50.17%
DC	36.20%
Image	2.86%
Dark Horse	2.28%
Dynamic	1.73%
IDW	1.63%
Devil's Due	1.08%
Avatar	0.53%
Bongo	0.41%
Gemstone	0.40%

Share of ALL publications (in dollars)

Publisher	Share
Marvel	41.32%
DC	33.41%
Dark Horse	3.55%
Image	3.51%
Wizard	1.63%
Viz	1.58%
IDW	1.56%
Tokyopop	1.35%
Dynamic	1.33%
Devil's Due	1.10%

Source: *Diamond Comic Distributors, Comics & Games Retailer magazine*

For more on industry sales trends, visit the **Knowledge Base** forum at **www.cbgxtra.com**

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-- Peter Bickford, ComicBase

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-- Jeff Schultz, Collector

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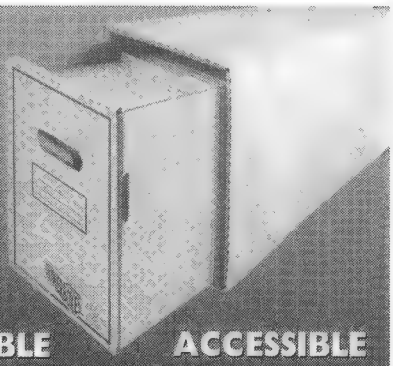
--Kevin Manning, Collector



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COMICS IN YOUR FUTURE

Comics shipping information is taken from publisher and distributor solicitations and updates and is as accurate as possible at presstime. Items marked with a ✪ have been rescheduled from an earlier calendar.

ON SALE IN DECEMBER 2006

3 Finger Publications
3 Geeks Jim's Jerky, $2.00

A.D. Vision
Anne Freaks Manga Vol 4, $9.99
Cromartie High School Manga Vol 6 Tp, $10.95
Cromartie High School Manga Vol 7 Tp, $10.95

A-10 Comics
Damaged #2, $2.99

AAA Pop
Vault of Michael Allred #4, $6.99

Abstract Studios
Strangers In Paradise #87, $2.99

AC Comics
Femforce #138, $6.95
Men of Mystery #63, $6.95

After Hours
7 Days To Fame Complete Set, $11.99

Afterburn
Blood & Roses Time Lords Saga #2, $2.99 (spec. ed. $6.99)

After-Shock
Sire #3, $3.50

AK Entertainment
Aya #8, $2.95
Jalila #8, $2.95
Rakan #8, $2.95
Zein #8, $2.95

Alias
10th Muse Vol 2 #15, $3.50
Legend of Isis #11, $3.50
Orion The Hunter #3, $3.50
Sixgun Samurai Tp, $14.99
Yenny #10, $3.50

American Mule Entertainment
Public Enemy #2, $2.99

Antarctic Press
Athena Voltaire Tp, $13.95
Dinowars Jurassic War of the Worlds #1, $3.50
Gold Digger #80, $2.99
Gold Digger Sourcebook Official Handbook To The Gold Digger Universe #1, $3.95
How To Draw Pocket Manga Vol 1 Tp, $12.95
Mischief & Mayhem Winter Fun Special, $2.95
Ninja High School #145, $2.99

Ape Entertainment
Black Coat Call To Arms Tp, $12.95
Magnitude, $3.50

Arcana Studio
Kade Sun of Perdition #3, $3.95
Outlaw Scorn 3030 Ad #2, $3.95 (spec. ed. $15)

Archaia Studios Press
Killer #2, $3.95
Mouse Guard #6, $3.50
Okko Cycle of Water #1, $3.95

Archangel Studios
Red Star Sword of Lies #2, $4.50

Ares Entertainment
Mars One Spectacular Preview Issue #0, $1.00

Aspen
Fathom Definitive Ed Vol 1 Tp, $39.99 (signed HC $89.99, sketch cvr. HC $249)
Shrugged #6, $2.99
Soulfire #9, $2.99

Atlantis Studios
Librarian Return To King Solomon's Mines Gn, $14.95

Avatar
Garth Ennis 303 Tp, $19.99
Lady Death Blacklands #3, (five covers $3.99, spec. ed. $9.99)
Lady Death Pirate Queen, (six covers $4.99, spec. ed. $9.99, leather ed. $24.99)
Night of the Living Dead Beginning #3, (five covers $3.99, spec. ed. $6.99)
Plague of the Living Dead Special #1, (seven covers $4.99)
Stargate Atlantis Wraithfall #3, (six covers $3.99, spec. ed. $5.99)

Bad Press
Bye Bye Harvey, $1.99

Archie

Following recent events in her life, Sabrina decides to give up magic completely in ***Sabrina* Vol. 2 #81**, shipping Dec. 20.

Dec. 6
Archie #571, $2.25
Archie Double Digest #175, $3.69

Dec. 13
Betty #161, $2.25
Jughead and Friends Digest #16, $2.49
Pals 'n' Gals Double Digest #108, $3.69
Sonic X #14, $2.25

Dec. 20
Betty & Veronica Digest #171, $2.49
Jughead #178, $2.25
Jughead's Double Digest #127, $3.69
***Sabrina Vol 2* #81, $2.25**
Sonic The Hedgehog Archives Vol 2 Tp, $7.49

Dec. 28
Archie Digest #231, $2.49
Betty & Veronica #223, $2.25
Sonic The Hedgehog #170, $2.25

DARK HORSE COMICS

The four-issue ***Outer Orbit*** begins Dec. 13. Written and illustrated by Zach Howard and Sean Murphy with Hans Rodionoff, the mini-series follows the adventures of interstellar bounty hunters.

Dec. 6
Bakers Meet Jingle Belle, $2.99
Emily The Strange Vol 1 Tp, $19.95
Old Boy Vol 3 TP, $12.95
Samurai Heaven & Earth Vol 2 #2, $2.99

Dec. 13
Blade of the Immortal #120, $2.99
Bottomfeeder Novel, $12.95
Conan Book of Thoth TP, $17.95
Crying Freeman Vol 4 TP, $14.95
Dark Horse Comics First Twenty Years HC, $24.95
Escapists #6, $2.99
Goon Wicked Inclinations Vol 5 TP, $14.95
Hellgate London #2, $2.99
Jonny Crossbones Dead Man At Devils Cove TP, $14.95
Lankhmar Book 1 Swords & Deviltry Novel, $8.95
Little Lulu Vol 13 Too Much Fun TP, $9.95
Oh My Goddess Vol 25 TP, $10.95
***Outer Orbit* #1, $2.99**
Playboy Interviews Larger Than Life, $22.95
Reiko The Zombie Shop Vol 5 TP, $12.95
Star Wars: Legacy #7, $2.99
Vampire Hunter D Vol 6 Pilgrimage of the Sacred & Profane Novel, $8.95
Worlds of Amano HC, $27.95

Dec. 20
Appleseed Id TP, $14.95
Banya Explosive Delivery Man Vol 2 TP, $12.95
Blade of the Immortal Shortcut Vol 16 Tp, $16.95
Conan #35, $2.99
Criminal Macabre Two Red Eyes #1, $2.99
Ghost In The Shell 1.5 Human Error Processor #3, $2.99
Rex Mundi #3, $2.99
Satsuma Gishiden Vol 2 TP, $14.95

Dec. 28
Path of the Assassin Vol 4 TP, $9.95
Perhapanauts Second Chances #3, $2.99
Star Wars: Dark Times #3, $2.99
Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic #12, $2.99
Usagi Yojimbo #99, $2.99

Basement Comics / Amryl Entertainment
Budd's Beauties & Beasts #2, $8.95
Cavewoman Jungle Jam #2, $3.25
Mike Hoffman's Rubber Disciple One Shot, $2.95

Big Wow Art
Dan Brereton's Drop Dead Girl & Other Drawings Sc, $20.00

Bloodfire Studios
Utopiates #1, $2.95

Blue Line Art
Sketch Magazine #31, $5.95

Blurred Books
Blurred Vision Vol 2 Gn, $14.95

Bongo
Bart Simpson Comics #33, $2.99
Simpsons Comics #125, $2.99
Simpsons Super Spectacular #4, $2.99

Boom! Studios
Cthulhu Tales Rising One Shot #2, $6.99
Mr Stuffins #1, $3.99
Planetary Brigade Origins #3, $3.99
Warhammer 40K #2, (two covers $2.99)
X Isle #5, $2.99

Carnal Comics
Demi & Vampirooni #1, $5.95

Checker Book Publishing Group
Alex Raymonds Flash Gordon Vol 6 Hc, $19.95

Claypool
Deadbeats #81, $2.50
Elvira #164, $2.50

Dakuwaka Productions
Helios Under The Gun #2, $2.99
Purity #1, $2.99

Del Rey
Gacha Gacha Next Revolution Vol 1 Gn, $12.95
Ghost Hunt Vol 6 Gn, $10.95
Kagetora Vol 4 Gn, $10.95
Kouga Ninja Scrolls Novel, $13.95
Kurogane Vol 3 Gn, $10.95
Pastel Vol 5 Gn, $10.95
School Rumble Vol 4 Gn, $10.95
Wallflower Vol 10 Gn, $10.95

Denis Kitchen Publishing
Reading Comics Postcard Book, $11.95

Devil's Due
Ddp Quarterly, $0.25
Family Guy Vol 2 Gn, $6.95
Forgotten Realms Crystal Shard #3, $4.95 (spec. ed. $8.95)
Forgotten Realms Dark Elf Trilogy Vol 3 Sojourn Hc, $29.99
G.I. Joe Special Missions Antarctica, $4.95
G.I. Joe: America's Elite #18, $2.95

Digital Manga Distribution
Day of Revolution Vol 2 Gn, $12.95
Edu Manga Einstein Gn, $9.95
La Esperanca Vol 5 Gn, $12.95
Little Butterfly Vol 3 Gn, $12.95
Passion Vol 3 Gn, $12.95

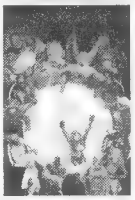
Digital Noixe
Omen Negative Issue, $2.99

Digital Webbing
Bloodrayne Plague of Dreams #3, (two covers $3.99)
Digital Webbing Presents #32, $3.99

Dork Storm Press
Dork Tower #36, $3.49
Dr Blink Superhero Shrink Vol 1 Id Ego & Superego Tp, $14.99
Nodwick #36, $2.99

Dr Master
Iron Wok Jan Gn #22, $9.95
Junk Vol 1 Gn, $9.95

The *Justice Society of America* returns Dec. 6 with a new #1. For more information, see our feature article on Page 12.



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52 #31, $2.50
All New Atom #6, $2.99
All Star Superman #6, $2.99
American Splendor #4, $2.99
DCU Infinite Christmas Special, $4.99
Desolation Jones #8, $2.99
Detective Comics #826, $2.99
Exterminators #12, $2.99
Jonah Hex #14, $2.99
Justice League Unlimited #28, $2.25
***Justice Society of America* #1, (two covers $3.99)**
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Aquaman Sword of Atlantis Once and Future TP, $12.99
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Texas Chainsaw Massacre #2, $2.99
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100 Bullets Vol 10 Decayed Tp, $14.99
52 #34, $2.50
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American Virgin #10, $2.99
Astro City The Dark Age Book Two #3, $2.99
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Batman and the Mad Monk #5, $3.50
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Crossing Midnight #2, $2.99
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JSA Classified #20, $2.99
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Supergirl #13, $2.99
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Uncle Sam and the Freedom Fighters #6, $2.99
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Drippytown Manufacturing Concern
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COMICS IN YOUR FUTURE

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Krazy & Ignatz 1939-1940 Brick Stuffed With Moombins, $19.95
Love & Rockets Vol 2 #18, $4.50
Neurotic Hc, $19.95
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Brian Keene's Fear Gn, $11.95

GEMSTONE
Donald Duck and Friends #347, $2.95
EC Archives Tales From The Crypt Vol 1 Hc, $49.95
Mickey Mouse Adventures Vol 13 Tp, $7.95
Mickey Mouse and Friends #296, $2.95
Uncle Scrooge #361, $6.95
Walt Disneys Comics & Stories #676, $6.95

GIRL TWIRL COMICS
Jane's World Omnibus Vol 1, $19.95

GLASS SHORE PRESS
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After School Nightmare Vol 2 Gn, $10.99
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GOODBUM STUDIOS
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Genesis Five #1, $2.99
Joe & Max #1, $2.99

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Heavy Metal March 2007, $5.99
Wild Sketches #2 Sc, $9.95

ICARUS PUBLISHING
A.G. Super Erotic Anthology #49, $4.99
A.G. Super Erotic Anthology #50, $4.99
Council of Carnality Unlimited Gn, $19.95

ICE KUNION
Angel Diary Vol 5 Gn, $10.95
Bring It On Vol 4, $10.95
Cynical Orange Vol 3, $10.95
Goong Vol 1 Gn, $10.95

IDW
24 Nightfall #2, $3.99
30 Days of Night Spreading The Disease #1, $3.99
Angel Auld Lang Syne #2, $3.99
Angel Old Friends Cover Gallery, $3.99
Angel Spotlight Tp, $19.99
Clive Barker's Great & Secret Show #8, $3.99
CSI Dying In The Gutters #5, $3.99
Doomed Magazine #4, $9.99
Lore Vol 2 Tp, $24.99
Scarface Scarred For Life #1, $3.99 (spec. ed. $19.99)
Spike Asylum #4, $3.99
Transformers Animated Movie Adaptation #3, $3.99
Transformers Escalation #2, $3.99
Transformers Evolutions Hearts of Steel Tp, $19.99
Transformers Generations #10, $2.99
Transformers Generations Vol 1 Tp, $19.99
Transformers Spotlight Six Shot, $3.99
Zombies Eclipse of the Undead #2, $3.99
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Dorothy Necklace, $35.00
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A Kiss For My Prince Vol 2 Gn, $10.95
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Goodnight Irene Gn, $14.95
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Toupydoops #5, $3.50

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Tales of Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles #30, $3.25

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MRCLEMENT.COM
Yeah Kou Phobia Gn, $14.99

NBM
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Room Mates Vol 2 Gn, $10.95
Treasury Victorian Murder Vol 8 Madeleine Smith Sc, $8.95

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Aegis Vol 3 Gn, $9.99
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Dokebi Bride Vol 4 Gn, $9.99
Great Catsby Vol 4 Gn, $19.99
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2000 A.D. Prog 2007, $10.99
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Xtnct Gn Hc, $19.99

SALT PETER PRESS
Doris Danger In Outer Space, $2.50

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Black Belt Club Vol 3 Beware of the Haunted Eye, $4.99

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Aoi House Vol 2 Gn, $10.99
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Kashimashi Manga Vol 1 Gn, $10.99

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Katmandu #35, $4.99

SILENT DEVIL PRODUCTIONS
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SKY DOG PRESS
Buzzboy Sidekicks Rule #3, $2.99

SLAVE LABOR GRAPHICS
Cemeterians #4, $2.95
Emo Boy #10, $2.95
Tiki Art Now Vol 3 Tp, $14.95
Tron #3, $3.50
Ursa Minors #4, $2.95

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Shark-Man #2, $3.99

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Star Trek Comics Classics Vol 3 Trial of James T Kirk Tp, $19.95
Star Trek Comics Classics Vol 4 Return of the Worthy Tp, $19.95
Star Trek: The Next Generation Comics Classics Vol 2 Battle Within Tp, $19.95
Star Trek: The Next Generation Comics Classics Vol 3 Maelstrom Tp, $19.95
Wallace & Gromit Magazine #17, $5.99
Wallace and Gromit A Pier Too Far Sc, $8.95

TOKYOPOP
Agent Boo Vol 2 Novel, $4.99
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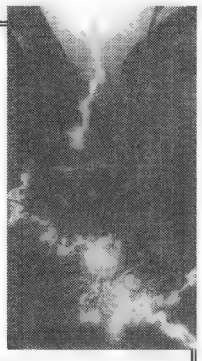
Arcana Vol 5 Gn, $9.99
Avatar Cinemanga Vol 4 Gn, $7.99
Battle Club Vol 3 Gn, $9.99
Battle Vixens Vol 10 Gn, $9.99
Bizenghast Falling Into Fear, $14.99
Blade of Heaven Vol 9 Gn, $9.99
Calling You Gn, $9.99
Chain Mail Addicted To You Novel, $7.99
Chibi Vampire Vol 1 Novel, $7.99
Chronicles of the Cursed Sword Vol 17 Gn, $9.99
Dazzle Vol 4 Gn, $9.99

image

Todd McFarlane returns to Spawn, crossing the hellish hunter with Gotham's Dark Knight in ***Spawn/Batman: Inner Demons***, a 56-page one-shot shipping Dec. 28.



DEC. 6
Complete Invincible Library Vol 1 HC, $125 (signed $175)
Cross Bronx #4, $2.99
Drink & Draw Vol 1 Hc, $24.99
Liberty Meadows Vol 4 Cold Cold Heart Tp, $14.99
Meltdown #1, $5.99
Night Club #4, $2.99
Nightly News #2, $2.99
Occult Crimes Taskforce Vol 1 Tp, $14.99
Phonogram #5, $3.50
Wonderful Wizard of Oz Gn, $9.99

DEC. 13
Angry Christ Comix Tp, $16.99
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Cryptics #2, $3.50
Deadworld Requiem For The World Tp, $16.99
Girls #20, $2.99
Invincible #39, $2.99
Portent Vol 1 Tp, $12.99
Savage Dragon Archives Vol 1 Tp, $19.99
True Story Swear To God #3, $2.99
Walking Dead #35, $2.99
Wonderlost #1, $5.99

DEC. 20
Bomb Queen II #3, $3.50
Deadworld #7, $3.99
Drain #2, $2.99
Elephantmen #5, $2.99
Godland #15, $2.99
Impaler #3, $2.99
PvP Vol 4 PvP Goes Bananas Tp, $12.99
Strange Girl #14, $3.50

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Age of Bronze #24, $3.50
Emissary #7, $3.50
Jack Staff Vol 3 Echoes of Tomorrow Tp, $16.99
Mike Carey's One Sided Bargains, $5.99
Negative Burn #8, $5.99
Official Handbook of the Invincible Universe #2, $4.99
***Spawn/Batman Inner Demons*, $5.99**
Superpatriot War On Terror #4, $2.99

MARVEL®

The long-delayed ***Ultimate Wolverine vs. Hulk #3,*** originally scheduled to ship in early 2006 has been rescheduled to ship Dec. 28.

DEC. 6

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Avengers Earths Mightiest Heroes II #3, $3.99
Beyond #6, $2.99
Bullet Points #2, $2.99
Criminal #3, $2.99
Doctor Strange Oath #3, $2.99
Essential Defenders Vol 2 Tp, $16.99
Exiles Annual #1, $3.99
Friendly Neighborhood Spider-Man #15, $2.99
Hedge Knight Premiere Hc, (two covers $19.99)
Incredible Hulk #101, $2.99
Irredeemable Ant-Man #3, $2.99
Marvel Adventures Spider-Man #22, $2.99
Marvel Comics Presents Wolverine Vol 4 Tp, $12.99
Marvel Holiday Special, $3.99
Moon Knight Vol 1 Bottom Premiere Hc, (two covers $19.99)
New Excalibur #14, $2.99
New X-Men Childhoods End Vol 3 Tp, $10.99
Newuniversal #1, $2.99
Red Prophet Tales of Alvin Maker #4, $2.99
Runaways Vol 2 Hc, $24.99
Spider-Man and Power Pack #2, $2.99
Spider-Man Reign #1, $3.99
Star Brand Classic Vol 1 Tp, $19.99
Ultimate Vision #1, $2.99
Uncanny X-Men #481, $2.99
What If Classic Vol 3 Tp, $24.99
White Tiger #2, $2.99
Wisdom #2, $3.99

DEC. 13

Amazing Spider-Girl #3, $2.99
Avengers Next #3, $2.99
Blade #4, $2.99
Daredevil Father HC, $24.99
Dark Tower Gunslinger Born Sketchbook, $2.99
Essential Off Handbook Marvel Universe Update 89 Vol 1 Tp, $16.99
Eternals #6, (two covers $3.99)
Fantastic Four: The End #3, $2.99
Ghost Rider #6, $2.99
Heroes Reborn Avengers Tp, $29.99
Iron Man/Captain America: Casualties of War One Shot, $3.99
Kabuki Reflections #7, $5.99
Magician Apprentice #4, $2.99
Marvel Adventures Fantastic Four #19, $2.99
Marvel Masterworks Avengers Vol 6 Hc, $49.99 (spec. ed. $54.99)
New X-Men #33, $2.99
Nextwave Agents of Hate #11, $2.99
Onslaught Reborn #2, $2.99
Powers Definitive Collection Vol 2 Hc, $29.99
Punisher Max From First To Last Hc, $19.99
Supreme Power Vol 2 Hc, $29.99
Thunderbolts #109, $2.99
Ultimate Marvel Flip Magazine #20, $4.99
Ultimate Tales Flip Magazine #20, $4.99
Ultimate X-Men #77, $2.99
What If X-Men Age of Apocalypse, $2.99
Winter Soldier Winter Kills One Shot, $3.99
Wolverine #49, $3.99
Wolverine Origins & Endings Tp, $13.99
Wonder Man #1, $2.99
X-23 Target X #1, (two covers $2.99)
X-Factor #14, $2.99
X-Men Phoenix Warsong #4, $2.99
Zombie #4, $3.99

DEC. 20

Anita Blake Vh Guilty Pleasures #3, $2.99
Astonishing X-Men #20, $2.99
Avengers Disassembled Hc, $24.99
Avengers Earths Mightiest Heroes II #4, $3.99
Cable Deadpool #35, $2.99
Civil War #6, (two covers $2.99)
Civil War: Front Line #9, $2.99
Civil War: War Crimes One Shot, $3.99
Immortal Iron Fist #2, $2.99
Iron Man #14, $2.99
Marvel 1602 Fantastick Four #4, $3.50
Marvel Adventures Avengers #8, $2.99
Marvel Select Flip Magazine #20, $4.99
Marvel Spotlight Ghost Rider, $2.99
Marvel Tales Flip Magazine #19, $4.99
Ms. Marvel #10, $2.99
New Avengers #26, $2.99
New Avengers Illuminati #1, $2.99
Punisher #42, $2.99
Runaways #23, $2.99
Sensational Spider-Man #33, $2.99
She-Hulk 2 #14, $2.99
Thor Blood Oath Tp, $14.99
Ultimate Spider-Man #103, $2.99
Ultimates 2 #13, $3.99
Union Jack #4, $2.99
Wolverine By Claremont & Miller Premiere Hc, (two covers $19.99)
X-Men First Class #4, $2.99

DEC. 28

All New Off Handbook Marvel Universe A To Z #12, $3.99
Annihilation #5, $2.99
Avengers Next #4, $2.99
Black Panther #23, $2.99
Captain America and the Falcon Nomad Tp, $24.99
Daredevil #92, $2.99
Exiles #89, $2.99
Hellstorm Son of Satan #3, $3.99
Heroes for Hire #5, $2.99
John Romita Jr 30th Anniversary Special, $3.99
Marvel Adventures Flip Magazine #20, $4.99
Marvel Heroes Flip Magazine #20, $4.99
Marvel Masterworks Golden Age All Winners Vol 2 HC, $49.99 (spec. ed. $54.99)
Marvel Visionaries John Buscema Hc, $34.99
Powers #23, $2.95
Ptolus City By The Spire #3, $2.99
Punisher War Journal #2, $2.99
Spider-Man Loves Mary Jane #13, $2.99
Spider-Man Loves Mary Jane Vol 2 New Girl Digest Tp, $7.99
Ultimate Fantastic Four #37, $2.99
Ultimate Power #3, $2.99
✪ *Ultimate Wolverine Vs. Hulk* #3, $2.99 (June 11-17)
What If X-Men Deadly Genesis, $3.99
Wolverine Origins #9, (two covers $2.99)
X-Men #194, $2.99
X-Men Deadly Genesis Tp, $19.99

Death Jam Vol 3 Gn, $9.99
Dragon Head Vol 5 Gn, $9.99
Good Luck Vol 1 Gn, $9.99
Grosse Adventures Vol 2 Stinky & Stan Blast Off Novel, $4.99
Hibikis Magic Gn, $9.99
Hyper Police Vol 8 Gn, $9.99
Innocent W Vol 2 Gn, $9.99
Kamen Tantei Vol 2 Gn, $9.99
Kare Kano Vol 21 Gn, $9.99
Kat & Mouse Vol 2 Gn, $5.99
Kilala Princess Vol 1 Gn, $5.99
Lights Out Vol 6 Gn, $9.99
Love Pistols Vol 1 Gn, $9.99
Lupin III World's Most Wanted Vol 8 Gn, $9.99
Menkui Vol 3 Gn, $9.99
Mitsukazu Mihara Ic In A Sunflower Gn, $9.99
Mugen Spiral Vol 1 Gn, $9.99
My Dead Girlfriend Vol 1 Gn, $9.99
My Little Pony Jr Cinemanga Vol 5 Gn, $3.99
Pearl Pink Vol 1 Gn, $9.99
Phantom Vol 1 Gn, $9.99
Phd Phantasy Degree Vol 8 Gn, $9.99
Princess Ai Roses & Tatoos, $14.99
Rg Veda Vol 8 Gn, $9.99
Roadsong Vol 2 Gn, $9.99
Rozen Maiden Vol 3 Gn, $9.99
Scrapped Princess Song of the Forgiven Vol 2 Novel, $7.99
Seikai Crest of the Stars Vol 2 Novel, $7.99
Shrine of the Morning Mist Vol 3 Gn, $9.99
Ultra Cute Vol 5 Gn, $9.99
Vampire Doll Guilt Na Zan Vol 2 Gn, $9.99
Visitor Vol 5 Gn, $9.99

TOP SHELF PRODUCTIONS

Lone Racer Gn, $12.95

TWOMORROWS PUBLISHING

Modern Masters Vol 10 Kevin Mcguire Sc, $14.95

UDON

Street Fighter II #6, (two covers $2.95, spec. ed. $12.50)
Street Fighter Legends Vol 1 Sakura Tp, $11.95

VIPER COMICS

Dead@17 Vol. 2 #4, $3.25
Villains Vol. 1 Thick As Thieves Tp, $11.95
You'll Have That Vol 2 Tp, $4.95

VIRGIN

Devi #6, $2.99
End of Story Mitrabhed #2, $2.99
John Woos Seven Brothers #3, (two covers $2.99)
Ramayan 3392 Ad #4, $2.99
Sadhu #6, $2.99
Snakewoman #6, $2.99
Walk-In, $2.99

VIZ

Bastard Vol 14 Tp, $9.99
Black Cat Vol 6 Tp, $7.99
Case Closed Vol 15 Gn, $9.99
Cheeky Angel Vol 16 Gn, $9.99
Death Note Vol 9 Tp, $7.99
Dr. Slump Vol 11 Tp, $7.99
From Far Away Vol 14 Gn, $9.99
Fullmetal Alchemist Vol 11 Tp, $9.99
Hunter X Hunter Vol 12 Tp, $7.99
Inu Yasha Vol 28 Tp, $8.95
Is Vol 11 Gn, $7.99
La Corda Doro Vol 2 Tp, $8.99
Mar Vol 11 Gn, $7.99
One Piece Vol 13 Tp, $7.95
Ouran High School Host Club Vol 8 Tp, $8.99
Please Save My Earth Vol 20 Tp, $9.99
Prince of Tennis Vol 17 Gn, $7.95
Princess Mononoke Film Comic Vol 5 Gn, $9.99
Project Arms Vol 15 Tp, $9.99
Punch Vol 2 Gn, $8.99
Read Or Dream Vol 2 Tp, $9.99
Reborn Vol 2 Gn, $7.99
Red River Vol 16 Gn, $9.99
Shaman King Vol 11 Tp, $7.95
Shojo Beat Feb 07 Vol 3 #2, $5.99
Shonen Jump Feb 07 #50, $4.99
Skip Beat Vol 4 Tp, $8.99
Vampire Knight Vol 1 Tp, $8.99
W Juliet Vol 14 Gn, $9.99
Whistle Vol 15 Tp, $7.99
Yakitate Japan Vol 2 Tp, $9.99
Yu Gi Oh Millennium World Vol 5 Tp, $7.95

WILDCARD INK

Gumby #4, $3.99

ZENESCOPE ENTERTAINMENT

Grimm Fairy Tales #14, $2.99
Se7En Lust #4, $3.99

Comic-book sales

The difference a decade makes

by **JOHN JACKSON MILLER**

It's a growing resource: Ten years worth of monthly comics estimates charts are online at *cbgtra.com*.

Just follow the link to "Sales Charts!"

Ratings are a game of life and death in the the TV world; people live and die by them. While the same may be true of comics, at times, it's been more like a game of Texas Hold 'em: The only ratings you *really* know are your own!

This may sound surprising to the new reader, who has a variety of online places to look for comics sales charts. They're also in ***CBG***, of course — and just about every circulation figure we've ever come across or generated also went into our various editions of ***The Standard Catalog of Comic Books***, fourth edition still available. [For those of you wondering — No, there wasn't another edition this year; we couldn't figure out how to get all the information to fit at a size where the binding wouldn't crack. Or your back.]

(Trivial note: If you drop the *Standard Catalog* on your foot, you scream the name of the U.N. Secretary General who was serving the year you started collecting comics:

"Dag Hammarskjöld!"

"Javier Pérez de Cuéllar!"

"Boutros Boutros-Ghali!"

We had to act before we started hearing screams of *"Ban Ki-Moon!"* from shops across the land. It was the responsible thing to do...)

But I digress, as the man said. There *were* days when, if you wanted to know how comics were selling relative to each other, you had to wait until the end of the year — and then go around scarfing up Statements of Ownership.

You never forget your first data

With the Direct Market in comics, things improved dramatically, with first Capital City Distribution and then Diamond Comic Distributors each rolling out a similar monthly report for their sales.

While they didn't publish exact sales, they did go a bit beyond a simple ordinal ranking. What Capital City began doing in 1986 — and what Diamond still does — is index all titles against one key title, such as, in Diamond's case, *Batman*. So you'd see something like...

***Batman* #657**	**Order index: 100.00**
***Uncanny X-Men* #478**	**Order index: 98.35**

That literally means that, at the time the distributor took the reading, *Uncanny X-Men*'s orders were 98.35% of *Batman*'s.

According to Milton Griepp, the Capital City co-owner who ran the first listings, the idea behind reporting this was, beyond giving us publishers the ability to see where things stood, retailers would be able to adjust orders to suit whatever the national trends were. If you were only ordering one *Uncanny X-Men* copy for every two *Batman*s, you'd know you were ordering less than the national average and, perhaps, losing out on sales. On the flip side, you got a notion of where the thinking was on an untested title, so you didn't continue to overorder.

Neither Capital City then nor Diamond now published actual numbers; Griepp said that was beyond what he was trying to do in the 1980s, and that's the way it's been ever since. It's not hard to see why. Publishing the raw sales data might have cut some publishers too close to the quick, especially when their fortunes were failing; advertising that was hardly the distributor's job. And with as many distributors in competition as there were in the beginning, announcing one's actual sales might not have made competitive sense.

And the "indexed" numbers did answer at least the *publishers'* desires to know what others were selling. Since publishers knew what *they* sold to the distributors, they could easily reverse-engineer the "magic number" and use their own preorders to find an estimate for what all other titles' preorders actually were.

It was a dicey mathematical proposition back in the days of two distributors, because no publisher could assume that its ratio of Capital-to-Diamond sales would be the same as all the other publishers'. (And, in fact, they usually weren't.) But they still tried, and, throughout the early 1990s, various "magic numbers" would circulate back-channel in the industry each month.

Until 1995, when Marvel bought its own distributor, Heroes World, and left the catalogs of the existing distributors. Suddenly, one of the biggest pieces of the puzzle was gone.

The Great Dividing

Imagine trying to figure out the weekly box office totals — surely, one of the most publicized horse-races in the world of commerce — without, say, any Paramount movies listed. Sure, there were still lists, but they didn't mean much.

That state of affairs couldn't last long in an industry starved for information, and, within a year of Marvel going independent, a number of publishers came to me to serve as a third party. At the time, I was editing ***CBG***'s sister magazine, then called *Comics Retailer* — and, while I had done my own magic-number calculations before, we'd never published anything. Now, there was clearly a need. So, on gaining the help of several Diamond publishers in unlocking its sales chart, we merged that information with data obtained from Heroes World to reconcile both into one list. Capital City was gone by then, so only two pieces were needed.

The first figures appeared in *Comics Retailer* #56, the November 1996 edition — and covered the preorders for September 1996. That month was otherwise notable for the beginning of Marvel's short-lived "Heroes Reborn" experiment, in which Marvel put four of its major titles in the hands of two Image Comics cofounders, Rob Liefeld and Jim Lee.

Heroes World folded before long, and Marvel took its business back to Diamond. I continued to crank out the sales estimates with the help of various publisher partners, however — and, with the rise of the Internet, many others began doing their own calculations and analyses. (That list includes their pioneer, Milton Griepp, whose figures have been appearing for much of the 2000s on ICV2.com.) I have continued, as well, recently moving all the data online onto *CBGXtra.com* (click on "Sales Charts") and still working from Excel files titled "Harmony," a reminder of the mission behind their origin.

In October, I hit 10 years of reports, making some broader comparisons possible. It's not entirely apples-to-apples, it should be said. In 1996, we were looking at preorders only; some of those comics we reported orders for didn't come out or were canceled and received different orders later on. Today's reports include everything that actually shipped, including reorders. There were differences during the Heroes World era between the distributors' reporting methods; Diamond's publishers were supplying data based on purchase orders they had received, so the two distributors were probably not reporting sales from the same instant in time. And, finally, we know far more about what trade paperbacks are selling, and in what amounts, from Diamond today than we did back then.

Still, looking back, we see a few changes...

Change: The big got bigger

One major difference between 1996 and 2006 is one you might not have expected to see back then: **Marvel and DC** together now account for far more of the industry's sales. Marvel and DC's collective market share of the total number of comic books ordered in Diamond's Top 300 was 72% — which dropped to 67%, if you figure it as a share of dollars. In September 2006, they accounted for a combined 82% of the units in the Top 300 — which becomes ***86%,*** when you convert those copies to dollars. Let's say that again: from 67% to 86% of all dollars in just a decade!

Where the heck did everyone else go?

Well, let's look. The #3 publisher in 1996 was **Image**. It's still #3 in most categories today — swapping with Dark Horse from time to time — but its market share is close to a third of what it was a decade ago. Why?

You could claim changing tastes in some cases (*Spawn*, #11 on the charts then, ranks 85th now), but a bigger reason is the breakup of the original line-up. Here's Liefeld and Lee again. Rob Liefeld's resignation from Image was announced in the very same *Comics Retailer* in which the September 1996 figures were published; *Glory*, *Youngblood*, and *Supreme* weren't Image's top sellers then but they were a fair-sized chunk of the overall. And then, a couple of years later, Jim Lee moved WildStorm from Image to DC.

Image has largely replaced those when it comes to its number of offerings — it had 33 titles in the Top 300 in September 1996, compared with 26 today — but the new titles don't punch the same numeric weight the Liefeld and Lee titles once did. (On the other hand, Image makes up a good deal of market-share ground today when trade paperbacks are added, so clearly a lot more of the line is getting a chance at that second life.)

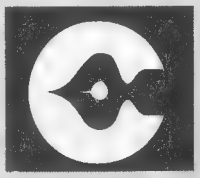
Dark Horse, for its part, differs the most greatly in the number of periodical comic books it produces. Focusing on other formats, it's gone from 29 comic books on the September 1996 list to 13 in September 2006. Look at its periodical titles further down the 1996 list, and you see a number of projects (*Cud Comics*, *Big Blown Baby*, *Tongue Lash*) that in 2006 it or another publisher might simply go direct-to-trade-paperback with, to get the best result. And many do.

So, if you figure Marvel and DC snagged about 10 points from Image and Dark Horse, where's the rest come from? Well, let's look at some of the other names in September 1996's top publishers:

Topps was #5, thanks to the *X-Files* wave, and got out of comics not long after it crested. A Topps product in a comics shop today is more likely to be a HeroClix figure.

Maximum, in sixth place, was Rob Liefeld's on-the-side publishing interest to Image. Rob's still around, but the Maximum brand isn't. Ninth-place **Homage** is another case of direct absorption by the Big Two; Lee's sideline publishing interest in 1996, it went with him to DC.

Familiar icons from the nineties...



A tale of six Septembers

Here's a biennial look at our estimates of comics sold by **Diamond Comic Distributors** and **Heroes World Distribution** for the month of September...

1996

	Comic-book Title	Price	Pub.	Preorders
1	Fantastic Four (V. 2) #1	$2.95	Marvel	314,000
2	Iron Man (V. 2) # 1	$2.95	Marvel	277,500
3	Avengers (V. 2) #1	$2.95	Marvel	276,700
4	Captain America (V. 2) #1	$2.95	Marvel	274,100
5	Uncanny X-Men #338	$1.95	Marvel	203,700
6	X-Men #58	$1.95	Marvel	203,100
7	Wolverine #107	$1.95	Marvel	184,300
8	X.S.E. #1	$1.95	Marvel	172,300
9	Incredible Hulk #447	$1.50	Marvel	170,000
10	Spectacular Spider-Man #240	$1.50	Marvel	165,400
11	Spawn #54	$1.95	Image	161,500
12	Curse of the Spawn #1	$1.95	Image	158,900
13	Elektra #1	$1.95	Marvel	155,000
14	X-Men '96	$2.95	Marvel	141,200
15	Generation X #21	$1.95	Marvel	141,000
16	Magneto #1	$1.95	Marvel	139,000
17	X-Man #21	$1.95	Marvel	131,700
18	X-Force #60	$1.95	Marvel	126,200
19	X-Factor #128	$1.95	Marvel	122,200
20	Cable #37	$1.95	Marvel	121,700
21	X-Men: Rise of Apocalypse #2	$1.95	Marvel	108,400
22	Generation X '96 #1	$2.95	Marvel	108,400
23	Excalibur #102	$1.95	Marvel	102,200
24	Deathblow/Wolverine #1	$2.50	Image	95,800
25	Final Night #1	$1.95	DC	91,400

1998

	Comic-book Title	Price	Pub.	Preorders
1	Uncanny X-Men #361	$1.99	Marvel	138,100
2	X-Men #81	$1.99	Marvel	132,400
3	Danger Girl #5	$2.50	Image	117,700
4	Spawn #78	$1.95	Image	110,200
5	Battle Chasers #5	$2.50	Image	107,400
6	Avengers #10	$1.99	Marvel	104,400
7	Wolverine #131	$1.99	Marvel	102,300
8	Wolverine #130	$1.99	Marvel	100,500
9	JLA #1000000	$1.99	DC	100,300
10	Daredevil #1	$2.50	Marvel	91,700
11	Fantastic Four #11	$1.99	Marvel	88,000
12	DC One Million #1	$2.95	DC	85,700
13	Captain America #11	$1.99	Marvel	82,700
14	DC One Million #2	$1.99	DC	81,700
15	DC One Million #3	$1.99	DC	80,600
16	Mutant X #2	$1.99	Marvel	80,100
17	DC One Million #4	$1.99	DC	80,000
18	Iron Man #10	$1.99	Marvel	78,600
19	Thor #5	$1.99	Marvel	74,200
20	Witchblade #26	$2.50	Image	70,800
21	Amazing Spider-Man #441	$1.99	Marvel	69,100
22	Darkness #18	$2.50	Image	68,500
23	Peter Parker Spider-Man #98	$1.99	Marvel	68,200
24	Peter Parker Spider-Man #97	$1.99	Marvel	65,400
25	Crimson #5	$2.50	Image	64,800

2000

	Comic-book Title	Price	Pub.	Preorders
1	Uncanny X-Men #386	$2.25	Marvel	111,900
2	X-Men #106	$2.99	Marvel	109,400
3	Wolverine #156	$2.25	Marvel	77,500
4	JLA #47	$2.25	DC	76,600
5	Avengers #34	$2.99	Marvel	70,400
6	Punisher #8	$2.99	Marvel	68,500
7	Midnight Nation #1	$2.50	Image	64,200
8	Spawn #102	$2.50	Image	64,100
9	Daredevil #18	$2.99	Marvel	64,000
10	X-Men Black Sun #1	$2.99	Marvel	60,800
11	X-Men Black Sun #2	$2.99	Marvel	56,200
12	X-Men Black Sun #5	$2.99	Marvel	55,800
13	X-Men Black Sun #4	$2.99	Marvel	55,200
14	X-Men Black Sun #3	$2.99	Marvel	55,100
15	Ultimate Spider-Man #1	$2.99	Marvel	54,400
16	Universe X #2	$3.50	Marvel	54,300
17	Rising Stars #11	$2.50	Image	51,100
18	Amazing Spider-Man #23	$2.25	Marvel	49,300
19	Tomb Raider #8	$2.50	Image	48,400
20	Iron Man #34	$2.25	Marvel	48,200
21	Batman Dark Victory #12	$2.95	DC	47,600
22	Punisher Painkiller Jane	$3.50	Marvel	47,500
23	Peter Parker Spider-Man #23	$2.25	Marvel	46,900
24	Thor #29	$2.25	Marvel	46,900
25	Detective Comics #750	$4.95	DC	45,800

Some publishers are still with us under the original names but they've cut back their comic-book format offerings. Seventh-place **Harris** was running three Vampirella titles at once in September 1996, all placing in the high 100s. Harris is still around but hasn't had a comic book in the Top 300 since March, when a single Vampy book took 200th place. Eight-place **Sirius** had six comics in the Top 300 in September 1996 (including the actual 300th place title, *Akiko*), plus two more that placed below that. In September 2006's list, it's down to a single *Poison Elves* entry.

Tenth-place **London Night** really starts the serious MIA list. Now, comics publishers are like what Len Wein says about comics characters — they're "never really dead unless you can see the body, and usually not even then."

Some have properties that have resurfaced other places: **Chaos** (11th place) and **Caliber** (15th) are examples. And certainly the people behind the companies do, too: 1996's 13th-place publisher **Kitchen Sink** is gone, but the September 2006 list finds Denis Kitchen re-entering the field, publishing under his own name. **Verotik** (18th) has shown up on the list with a new project here or there over the years.

You can probably say that some, like Tekno•Comix publisher **Big Entertainment** (16th) and **Acclaim** (19th) are gone for good, but who knows what might happen in the world of corporate properties? We never thought we'd see *Doctor Solar* again until Valiant dug him up.

There are plenty of publishers from 1996 still around — **Bongo**, **Fantagraphics**, **Antarctic**, and, of course, **Archie** — but, on the whole, their share of the periodical sales charts haven't changed that much for the others' absence.

No, while the exact size of the pie may be open to debate, there's no doubting: Marvel and DC are bigger wedges than they were.

Change: Manga mania

So, if Marvel and DC have taken the market share of those vanished publishers, who's taken their place on the list of larger publishers? It's the manga publishers, mainly. Viz is a bigger force in 2006 than it was in 1996, and Tokyopop, Digital Manga, and Random House are on the list now.

Notably, the influence of manga is almost entirely in Diamond's trade paperback list — since Viz got out of the comic-book business some years back. Viz had eight comics in the Top 300 in 1996; today, it just has *Shonen Jump* and *Shojo Beat*.

Change: For $5? Not much!

The average comic book in the Top 300 back in September 1996 cost $2.56, whereas the average one today will run you $3.21.

But that's misleading, because the list is almost always bottom-heavy with more expensive comics that don't necessarily sell as well. The average weighted price of comics in September 1996 — that is, the price of the average comic book retailers ordered — was closer to

Note that because of Diamond's reporting procedures, the numbers below are preorders for 1996-2002, and final orders thereafter.

Trivial note: Today's Top 20 has four comics with an X in their title. A decade ago, the same list had eight, including a first issue in the Top 10 that today could well be a trivia question: What *did X.S.E.* stand for?*

*Answer: Xavier Security Enforcers

2002

	Comic-book Title	Price	Pub.	Preorders
1	Transformers Gen. One #6	$2.95	D'wave	127,500
2	Ultimates #8	$2.25	Marvel	111,000
3	New X-Men #132	$2.25	Marvel	105,600
4	Amazing Spider-Man #45	$2.25	Marvel	105,400
5	Spider-Man Black Cat #4	$2.99	Marvel	101,100
6	Ultimate Spider-Man #26	$2.25	Marvel	100,400
7	Ultimate Spider-Man #27	$2.25	Marvel	100,400
8	Ultimate X-Men #22	$2.25	Marvel	98,400
9	Transformers Armada #3	$2.95	D'wave	96,000
10	Uncanny X-Men #412	$2.25	Marvel	91,000
11	Uncanny X-Men #413	$2.25	Marvel	90,700
12	Thundercats #2	$2.95	DC	82,100
13	Wolverine #181	$2.25	Marvel	74,200
14	Spider-Man Blue #5	$3.50	Marvel	70,100
15	X-Treme X-Men #18	$2.99	Marvel	68,500
16	Captain America #6	$2.99	Marvel	67,200
17	G.I. Joe #10	$2.95	Image	66,100
18	JLA #72	$2.25	DC	64,900
19	Battle of the Planets #3	$2.99	Image	64,800
20	JLA #71	$2.25	DC	64,700
21	Weapon X #1	$2.25	Marvel	62,600
22	Peter Parker Spider-Man #48	$2.25	Marvel	60,500
23	Green Arrow #17	$2.50	DC	60,400
24	Fantastic Four #61	$2.25	Marvel	58,700
25	Avengers #58	$2.25	Marvel	58,400

2004

	Comic-book Title	Price	Pub.	Orders
1	Superman Batman #12	$2.95	DC	139,500
2	Astonishing X-Men #5	$2.99	Marvel	131,500
3	Identity Crisis #4	$3.95	DC	128,800
4	Superman #209	$2.50	DC	116,800
5	Ultimate X-Men #51	$2.25	Marvel	95,000
6	Uncanny X-Men #448	$2.25	Marvel	94,700
7	Ultimate Spider-Man #65	$2.25	Marvel	94,200
8	Uncanny X-Men #449	$2.25	Marvel	93,800
9	Avengers #502 (#87)	$2.25	Marvel	93,100
10	Avengers #501 (#86)	$2.25	Marvel	91,000
11	X-Men #161	$2.25	Marvel	90,600
12	X-Men #162	$2.25	Marvel	89,900
13	Ultimate Fantastic Four #11	$2.25	Marvel	87,600
14	Amazing Spider-Man #512	$2.25	Marvel	87,200
15	Ultimate Nightmare #2	$2.25	Marvel	87,200
16	X-Men: The End #3	$2.99	Marvel	84,000
17	Wolverine: The End #5	$2.99	Marvel	79,600
18	Marvel Knights Spider-Man #6	$2.99	Marvel	71,500
19	Batman #632	$2.25	DC	71,200
20	Wolverine #19	$2.25	Marvel	65,000
21	Teen Titans #16	$2.50	DC	64,200
22	Teen Titans #15	$2.50	DC	63,100
23	JLA #105	$2.25	DC	60,800
24	Strange #1	$3.50	Marvel	60,000
25	JLA #106	$2.25	DC	59,800

2006

	Comic-book Title	Price	Pub.	Orders
1	Civil War #4	$2.99	Marvel	272,500
2	Justice League of America #2	$2.99	DC	143,400
3	Astonishing X-Men #17	$2.99	Marvel	124,000
4	Amazing Spider-Man #535	$2.99	Marvel	117,000
5	Ultimate Spider-Man #100	$3.99	Marvel	116,200
6	52 #18	$2.50	DC	111,800
7	52 #19	$2.50	DC	111,600
8	52 #20	$2.50	DC	111,100
9	52 #21	$2.50	DC	110,300
10	Wolverine #46	$2.99	Marvel	107,900
11	Civil War: Front Line #6	$2.99	Marvel	105,300
12	Wolverine: Origins #6	$2.99	Marvel	101,000
13	Ultimates 2 #12	$3.99	Marvel	97,200
14	Civil War: X-Men #3	$2.99	Marvel	93,000
15	Batman #657	$2.99	DC	91,300
16	Uncanny X-Men #478	$2.99	Marvel	89,800
17	Captain America #22	$2.99	Marvel	82,200
18	X-Men #191	$2.99	Marvel	82,000
19	Green Lantern #13	$2.99	DC	78,100
20	Civil War: Young Avengers #3	$2.99	Marvel	75,500
21	Civil War Files	$3.99	Marvel	74,700
22	X-Men Phoenix Warsong #1	$2.99	Marvel	71,700
23	Ultimate X-Men #74	$2.99	Marvel	68,900
24	Supergirl #10	$2.99	DC	67,400
25	Flash Fastest Man Alive #4	$2.99	DC	66,700

$2.34. Today, the weighted average is nearer to $3.09.

What that gap tells you is that in 1996, the comics that sold the best were a lot more likely to be lower in price than others. Yes, the four "Heroes Reborn" first issues were specially priced at $2.95 (and, thus, above the rest of the market) — but almost every popular title that followed them on the charts was priced at $1.95 — or even $1.50!

Meanwhile, a top-selling comic today is priced a lot closer to the weighted average. Your math teacher would tell you that's partially because, as stated earlier, those top-selling comics account for a lot more of the set of sales being averaged. But it's also true that, where the majors did once compete more on price, the market seems to have gravitated again to something it once had: a fixed price for a 32-page issue. (It's just $2.99 now, rather than 25¢!)

For a lot more on how comics pricing has changed over the years, see my column in ***CBG*** #1619.

Change: The Momentum

Looking just between 1996 and 2006, you might not think much progress has been made, sales-wise. There were 23 titles in September 1996 with preorders over 100,000 copies, versus only 12 in September 2006. And, while trade paperbacks have helped the industry cover most of the financial gap between the two periods, just for comic books, 1996 was far superior for the business. Right?

Not so much. In business, it's always important to look at direction and momentum. And, as you can see from the charts above, the industry had nowhere to go but down from 1996. And it had already been falling for three years by then! Thousands of comics shops had already closed since 1993 — and another couple of thousand had yet to close.

Growth since the market bottomed out hasn't always been steady — nor has it been consistent from publisher to publisher. But the metrics, to use a *Dilbert* boardroom term, have generally been positive — and this year in particular sees comics sales up in every category we measure.

No, we're not doing million-copy runs of comics, as we did in the early 1990s. On the other hand, we're pretty sure all the comics sold today are being *read* — and that's causing the word to spread that our entertainment medium is better than it's been in a long time.

The seventh-place title in September 2000 wouldn't even have made the Top 25 six years later. That's progress, right?

JOHN JACKSON MILLER is a writer of comic books including *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic*. Talk numbers and words with him at *www.faraway press.com*, at *www.cbgxtra.com*, or at *ohso@krause.com*.

And, if you're interested in **comics sales charts**, you can see every month from 1996 to now on *CBGXtra.com*. Just follow the link to "Sales Charts"!

COMIC BOOKS THAT MADE A DIFFERENCE ... TO ME

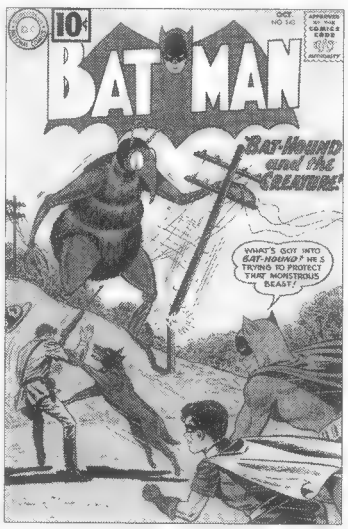
by **BEAU SMITH**

It's kinda ironic that one of the first comics I can remember owning was the "start" of the Silver Age of comics.

As readers and collectors of comic books we all have them. They may be old or they may be new, but one thing's for sure, they made a difference.

Maybe they didn't make a difference to the world or even other readers, but they made a personal difference to us, the guy or girl that bought it. I started buying comic books before I could read. There was just something that always drew me to the words, the pictures, the characters, and the colors. I'm sure some shrink or brain scientist could probably tell us what that attraction is by something in our DNA or emotional make up, but that's for them to figure out, not me.

One of the first comics I ever remember having was *Showcase* #4. It's kinda ironic that one of the first comics I can remember owning was the "start" of the Silver Age of comics. I couldn't read it when I bought it (or it was bought for me), but I remember the pictures so very well. I'm sure my dad explained the story to me at some point and later on I was able to read it myself. I'm sad to say that a few years later I traded *Showcase* #4 to a kid that lived down the street for something else that I hadn't read. I'm sad about it from a sentimental stand point, but not from one of money. I read that thing so many times the condition couldn't have been very good. Besides, trading comics was the currency and business of kids back then.



My interest in comics were the core of what has made me not only a writer, but fueled my life long love of books and reading as well. I remember I just had to find out what those words meant so I could really enjoy those pictures even more. To this day I generally read one to two books a week plus assorted papers and magazines. I owe that to comic books.

For me it's pretty easy to pick the comics that made a difference in my life. The reason being I keep all of them here on my shelf within arm's reach and have for years. So today I've hauled 'em off the shelf and sorted 'em out. I thought I'd share these books and a little of their personal history with you.

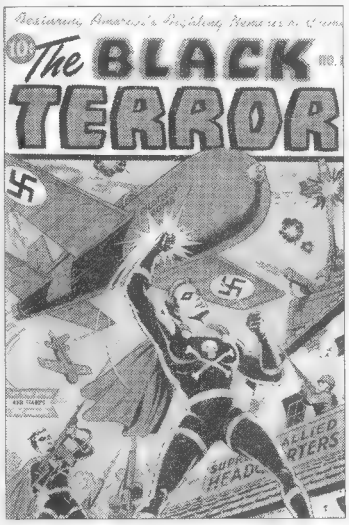
***Batman* #143**
DC (Oct 61)

This comic was bought for me by my mom the day before I started first grade. Mom could tell I was a little anxious about going to school so she figured that since I liked comics this might work as a motivational tool. She told me that in school they'd teach me to read all the words in the comics so I'd know everything the characters said. I already knew some of the words, but I was stoked to think that this school business might be the key to finding out everything those printed pages had to say. I remember laying in bed and looking at every page

thinking that soon I'd know all the secrets that were just out of my reach. I fell asleep and the next thing I knew it was morning. I couldn't understand why mom wouldn't let me take the comic book to school. I thought they were gonna teach me to read it in class that day. I had this vision of me coming home at 3 in the afternoon with the power to read everything. I found out that took a little longer than I expected.

The story in *Batman* #143 is a pretty silly one. It was mainly about Bat-Hound and this giant alien insect that landed in its spaceship here on Earth. Bat-Hound is the only one that can understand the giant insect and he protects it from not only the bad guys, but the police and Batman as well. It turns out that the alien insect is a good guy who gives his life to save Batman and stop the bad guys. Even though it's silly by today's gritty standards, it has a great moral to it and leaves a mark on a kid to know compassion and the difference between right and wrong, something missing in most mainstream comics today.

***The Black Terror* #8**
Nedor Publishing (Nov 44)



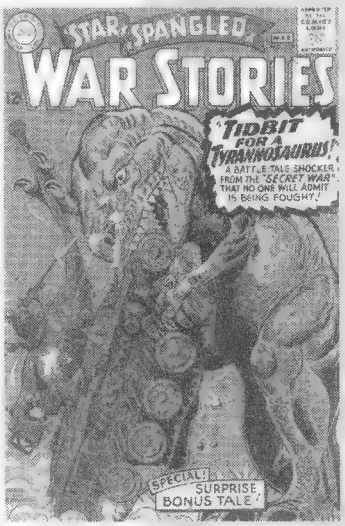
This was a comic book that my dad gave me that was left over from his childhood. He was about eight years old when he bought this and it somehow survived at my grandparents' house. Surprisingly enough, the comic is in wonderful condition today. I'm no expert grader, but I'd say it's Good to Very Good with a nice cover shine and pretty flat. All complete and no tears or rips. Pages are a nice off-white. How did this happen with it not only going through my dad's hands but mine as well? One of the unsolved mysteries of comics.

Anyway, this book was a super treasure to me. I had never heard of this character or publisher as a kid and as we all know, The Black Terror has the coolest costume ever invented. All black with a skull and crossbones on the chest. This was long before The Punisher.

As I said, The Black Terror made a huge impression on me. He shot machine guns, tossed hand bombs, thumped Nazis and the Japanese, rode a cool motorcycle, and could use his fists like nobody else. This issue was jammed with fistfights and butt kickings. He was tossing out smart one-liners long before any of the '80s movie action heroes. He had a sidekick like Batman's Robin with one huge difference. His sidekick was a bloodthirsty little kid that was such a badass that he just went by his first name ... Tim. He wore the same costume as The Black Terror and was using a machine gun long before Jonny Quest got his chance. Tim had to be the manliest sidekick ever.

This issue made a difference to me because in 1989 I got to bring back The Black Terror at Eclipse Comics . It was also my way of bringing my dad's gift back full circle. The Black Terror is something that stuck with me and continues to do so today. He's like family — in a really cool costume.

***Star Spangled War Stories* #125**
DC (Feb 66)


STAR SPANGLED
WAR STORIES
TIDBIT FOR A TYRANNOSAURUS!
A BATTLE-TALE SHOCKER FROM THE SECRET WAR THAT NO ONE WILL ADMIT IS BEING FOUGHT!
SPECIAL! SURPRISE BONUS TALE!

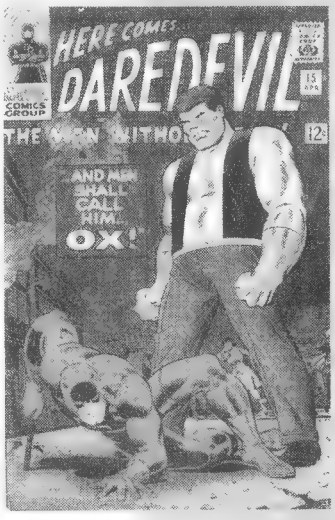
As a kid of the 1960s there was nothing better than army men and dinosaurs, well, cowboys, but I guess comics couldn't find a way to make the three work all at once.

Star Spangled War Stories #125 was the core of my afternoons in the yard playing in the dirt with my plastic army men and dinosaurs. I had been doing it for years and then one day at the drugstore, I saw my afternoon theater in the printed pages of this comic. Good thing I didn't have a slick lawyer then or I would've sued.

Thanks to Joe Kubert, Russ Heath, Ross Andru, and Mike Esposito, I was able to play out even more dramatic stories in the dirt with my toys. Almost every month they gave me new scripts to act out as my younger siblings tried to hurt themselves on our swing set. Thanks to *Star Spangled War Stories*, I was also able to expand my man vs monster stories to the sea. I played out aquatic fights in the bathtub and on vacation at the beach.

Enough time has passed, DC. Reprint *Star Spangled War Stories* in *Showcase Presents* or turn me loose on a new monthly series.

***Daredevil* #15**
Marvel (Apr 66)



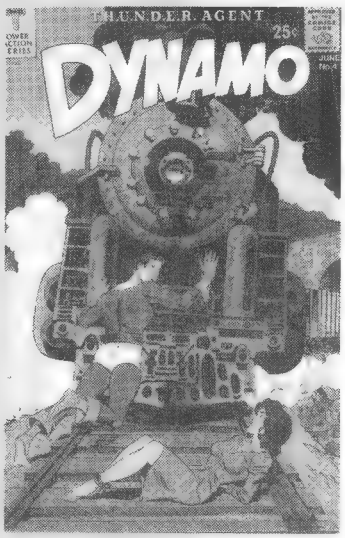
Don't get me wrong. I had been buying Marvel comics since the very early '60s, but *Daredevil* #15 is the one that made me leave DC like a jilted lover. This is the issue that turned me around to the Marvel way of life. I remember the day, the drugstore, and the weather of the day I bought this comic. Of all the

Of all the comics I own, this one has probably been read the most. It had everything that I ever wanted in a comic.

comics I own, this one has probably been read the most. It had everything that I ever wanted in a comic. A story with a moral and a twist by Stan Lee, incredible solid storytelling art by John Romita, Sr. and it was a stand-alone story that needed no past explanation on any character.

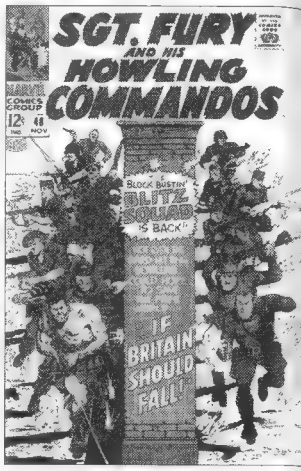
This is a perfect blueprint for a monthly stand-alone story and how it's done. It also took a more obscure villain in The Ox and showed that you can make any character a stand out with some thought. *Daredevil* #15 is one of the most perfectly paced stories I have ever read in comics in script, dialogue, and art. It should be a manual to any writer, editor, or artist. As a kid, this issue made me go back and find every back issue of *Daredevil* that had come before. Trust me, in the late '60s, there was no eBay or comic shops to sashay into. For those of you old enough to remember the small classified ads in the '60s Marvel comics, you might remember the ads by Howard M. Rogofsky of Flushing, N.Y., and The Grand Book Center of Brooklyn, N.Y. I had to find some of my *Daredevil* comics through them. I still remember the pain of having to pay $3 for *Daredevil* #1 and an average of $1 to $2 for higher issues. They must have gotten at least $12 out of me. That was a small fortune for a kid in the sixth grade. In the long run, I think I came out OK. I've got a complete run of *Daredevil* #1 through #200. After that, I lost interest in the stories and direction of the book.

***Dynamo* #4**
Tower Comics (Jun 67)



"Where did these come from?" That's the question that ran through my mind when I saw *Dynamo* #4 in the spinner rack. I had never heard of Tower Comics even though I had seen the artists' work in Marvel and DC comics. By that time I was a huge fan of Wally Wood's work and even knew his name. When I saw this amazing cover of his, I knew there had to be something behind it. I sure was right. There was George Tuska, Gil Kane, and other favorites doing these Tower Comics. I was hooked. It was like a secret new Marvel Comics line. The stories weren't as good as the ones Stan was writing, but they were really close and the characters were a load of fun. This issue made me a Tower Comics fan causing me to buy every issue they ever put out. A hunt that went on for decades. Again, without comic shops, books like this were truly found treasures. You kids today are so spoiled!

***Sgt. Fury and His Howling Commandos* #48**
Marvel (Nov 67)



This particular comic book was the part of the birth of the legend of *"Beau Smith-Real Man"*. This is perhaps the most manly, testosterone-filled comic book that has ever been published. From the cover to the last page, there is nothing but greatness. Written by the under rated Gary Friedrich and drawn by Dick Ayers and John Severin, this is the comic book that should be in everyone's collection. If I had Bill Gates' money I would buy every copy of this I could find and give them away to people. It's that damn good!

This book was a major influence on my own writing. It truly spoke to me..I felt as if this book was written and drawn just for me. I never tire of reading it — ever! There is humor, action, history, wonderful dialogue, and characters. Sgt. Fury and his Howling Commandos up against their Nazi counterparts The Blitz Squad. As a kid, I enjoyed Sgt. Rock and Easy Co., but Sgt Fury and his Howling Commandos fought the war I wanted to fight and they did it the way I wanted to do it. The action scenes in this issue are brilliant. If you don't have *Sgt. Fury And His Howling Commandos* #48, then go find it. I promise you will not be sorry.

There are a few more comics that helped mold me into the politically incorrect knuckle dragger that I am today, but time and space just won't allow me to go any further. Perhaps I'll pick back up on this topic another time. I sure hope that as readers this month's *Dottin' The Eyes* column has made you think of comic books that made a difference to you. Some might be big event blockbusters and others smaller, more obscure books. It doesn't much matter as long as they've found a place in your heart and memories. If you're a creator, maybe they inspired you to take up writing or art as a way of life or maybe a hobby that you enjoy. That's all good. Heck, that's the best.

BEAU SMITH invites questions, answers, thoughts or wonderful items of worth to The Flying Fist Ranch, P.O. Box 706, Ceredo, WV 25507. E-mail Beau at ***beau@flyingfistranch.com*** or visit his website: ***www.flyingfistranch.com***
Column © 2006 Beau Smith

It could happen...

The enemies of your collectibles are always lurking: fire, hurricanes, floods, theft, tornadoes. Thousands of these treasures are lost to collectors each year. Every collector needs a "Comfort Zone" of protection. That's our job. Your homeowners insurance is rarely enough to cover your valuable collectibles. Count on CIA for wide-ranging, inexpensive coverage. Contact us today!

What would happen if...

*Thousands of fine people lost their lifetime hobbies in the 2004 hurricane season. Collectibles ranging from stamps and autographs of famous people, to wonderful model railroad layouts and glass figurines were sadly destroyed. Did insurance help many of these victims? In too many cases, the answer was, "**NO.**"*

I've been a collector all of my life—even before I became the owner of a firm that specializes in providing insurance for thousands of collectibles. I know what it's like to lose the treasures of a lifetime hobby. Here's a lesson I learned that I'd like to pass along to you: Homeowners insurance is rarely, if ever, adequate for collectibles. Take a minute now and call, write or e-mail us for brochures that can help your peace of mind.

Dan Walker

• **Sample collector rates:** $3,000 for $12, $10,000 for $40, $25,000 for $106, $50,000 for $216, $100,000 for $316, $200,000 for $476. Above $200,000, rate is $1.60 per $1,000.

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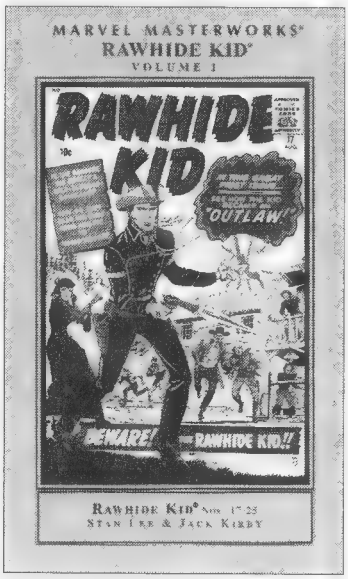
Here come the ho-ho-holidays ...

Give the gift of comics

by **TONY ISABELLA**

The magi, as you know, were wise men — wonderfully wise men who brought gifts to the Babe in the manger. They invented the art of giving Christmas presents.

— O. Henry



Christmas is lumbering toward us like Godzilla moving across Tokyo, which means many of us are fleeing for our lives and trying to finish our holiday shopping before we are consumed in a blast of radioactive fire. However, my chances of surviving the burning and the crumbling and the stomping have been improved by my use of one of the truly great inventions of our time: the Amazon wish lists.

Some of my friends have them; others do not. I am reasonably sure I'll be able to get good presents, *i.e.*, presents they really want, for my pals who have wish lists. The others will more than likely get fruitcakes containing so many non-organic preservatives that their expiration dates are 30 days past the end of all life as we know it.

I also have an Amazon wish list, and Sainted Wife Barb uses it, well, I was gonna say "religiously," but, thanks to this incredible advancement in gift-buying technology, Barb no longer needs to pray I'll like whatever she gives me. Science, albeit consumer science, marches on.

The Amazon wish list technology is so simple that even I was able to master it within moments:

"Create a Wish List of items you would like to have. You may share the list with family and friends, or you can choose to keep it to yourself. If you'd like to have different Wish Lists for different occasions or uses, feel free to create as many Wish Lists as you like!

"Find an item you'd like to include on your Wish List.

"Select the 'Add to Wish List' button.

"The item will be added to your Wish List."

While thinking about this stuff, an idea came to me that would have been brilliant, had it only come to me several months ago, when comics sellers could have made use of it: Comics retailers, especially those with websites, should offer customers the opportunity to create lists their family and friends could access. Amazon's prices are excellent, but it doesn't always have the best price, doesn't offer all the items available to the comics direct market, and doesn't sell back issues of comic books and comics-related magazines.

If John needs issues of *Cowboy Crime Romances* to complete his collection, Marsha won't be able to learn this from his Amazon wish list. But, if he *also* set up a wish list with his friendly comics retailer, she could find out which issues he wanted and find out if the retailer had them in stock.

A retailer who provided an online repository of his customers' wish lists, accessible at any time, would have an advantage over a retailer without a website. But that second retailer could still encourage his customers to make wish lists that he would keep on file to assist folks looking to buy presents for those customers.

Availability and price are always important, but, often, it's exemplary service that seals the deal.

While it may be too late for retailers to launch a "wish list" promotion for Christmas 2006, this is a sales tool with year-round value to both the retailer and his customers. I've used the Amazon wish lists to buy birthday and graduation presents — and sometimes to send gifts to ailing friends.

I still enjoy giving gifts whose recipients didn't even know the gifts existed or that they wanted them. I enjoy receiving such gifts, as well. As with most things, the wish list isn't the best way to go every single time. But, boy howdy, does it come in handy when inspiration eludes you and when you're just not sure what gift to give that beloved friend or relative.

Here's wishing you the happiest of holidays and special days. That's #1 on my wish list.

The Complete Chester Gould's Dick Tracy, Vol. 1
by Chester Gould

Comics icon Dick Tracy recently celebrated his 75th anniversary, and I can't think of a better way to commemorate that success than IDW's ***The Complete Chester Gould's Dick Tracy*, Vol. 1** ($29.99). Hard-hitting police action, unforgettable villains, tragic losses, the science of crime fighting, and the camaraderie of the cops who put their lives on the line to protect and serve. The Gould-Tracy legacy inspired so many other great works of detective fiction: Bob Kane and Bill Finger's *Batman*, *Dragnet*, Ed McBain's *87th Precinct*, all the way to *C.S.I.: Crime Scene Investigation* and its spin-offs, and so many others. But, when you travel back past the progeny of creator and creation, even going back to the earliest years of Tracy, you arrive at cracking good stories that can captive today's reader as much as they did the readers of 1931.

This first volume has all the *Dick Tracy* daily strips from Oct. 12, 1931, through May 20, 1933. The Sunday strips didn't tie into the daily continuity until May 29, 1932, and this volume reprints those Sundays to that point and in color. The remaining Sunday strips appear in the daily continuity, albeit in black-and-white. But wait, there's more.

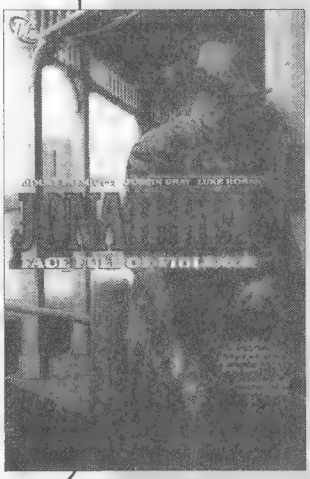
This first volume also includes: an introduction by Max Allan Collins, author of *Road to Perdition* and dozens of exciting novels, of great comics like *Ms. Tree* and *C.S.I.*, of the *Tracy* strip from 1977 to 1993, and of sharp suspense films like *Mommy* and *Real Time: Siege at Lucas Market*; the first part of an interview with Gould conducted by Collins and Matt Masterson in September 1980; and, most cool of all, the *Plain Clothes Tracy* strips Gould created to pitch his new hero to newspaper syndicates. There were but five of these strips, but, in them, Gould encapsulated the grim-and-gritty action and drama that would win him and Tracy millions of readers around the world.

Prepare for a spot of *déjà vu*. There has never been a better time to be a comics fan or reader. Amazing new comics and graphic novels are available side-by-side with collections of truly classic material. I commend IDW for getting Gould's *Dick Tracy* back into print and doing so with such obvious reverence.

The Complete Chester Gould's Dick Tracy, Vol. 1 earns the full five Tonys. I'm looking forward to Vol. 2.

www.idwpublishing.com

Jonah Hex: Face Full of Violence
by Jimmy Palmiotti, Justin Gray, and Luke Ross



If you like your Western comics more grim and realistic, I heartily recommend ***Jonah Hex: Face Full of Violence*** (DC, $12.99) by Jimmy Palmiotti, Justin Gray, and Luke Ross, with one memorable story drawn by original *Jonah Hex* artist Tony DeZuniga. Bar none, *Jonah Hex* is the best series being published by DC today, and this trade paperback collects the first six issues of this unusual and often shocking title.

Hex is the classic "spaghetti Western" hero brought to comic books. The scarred bounty hunter is a hero to some, a villain to those he hunts, and a man feared by almost all who cross his path. These stories can reach right down and grab you by the soul; they are tales of betrayal, monstrous evil, and rough justice, with that last being as close to a traditional happy ending as you're likely to find in this series. The Luke Ross art is every bit as powerful as the writing. For us Silver Age fans, one story even guest-stars a credible version of Sergio Aragonés' Bat Lash.

Jonah Hex: Face Full of Violence earns the full five Tonys, as befits one of the great comics of our time.

www.dccomics.com

Marvel Masterworks: Rawhide Kid Vol. 1

by Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, and Dick Ayers

***Marvel Masterworks: Rawhide Kid* Vol. 1** (Marvel, $49.99) was an early Christmas present to myself. These Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, and Dick Ayers comics — the book reprints #17-25 from 1960 and 1961 — are among my all-time favorite comics, but I had despaired of ever seeing such a collection in the wake of Ron Zimmerman's Marvel/MAX mini-series of 2003. That series was five issues of one sophomorically stupid joke, and I'd feared it had poisoned any chance of The Kid's classic adventures being reprinted. I've seldom been so happy to have been proven wrong.

This Rawhide Kid was the second Marvel Western hero with that name. The first one wasn't really a kid; he was an older man who, as I recall from the few of his stories I've seen, owned a ranch. When Lee and Kirby revived the title, they did it with a completely new character: a young orphan, raised and trained by a former Texas Ranger, who used his astonishing skill and lightning speed with his guns to bring the Ranger's murderers and other owl-hoots to justice.

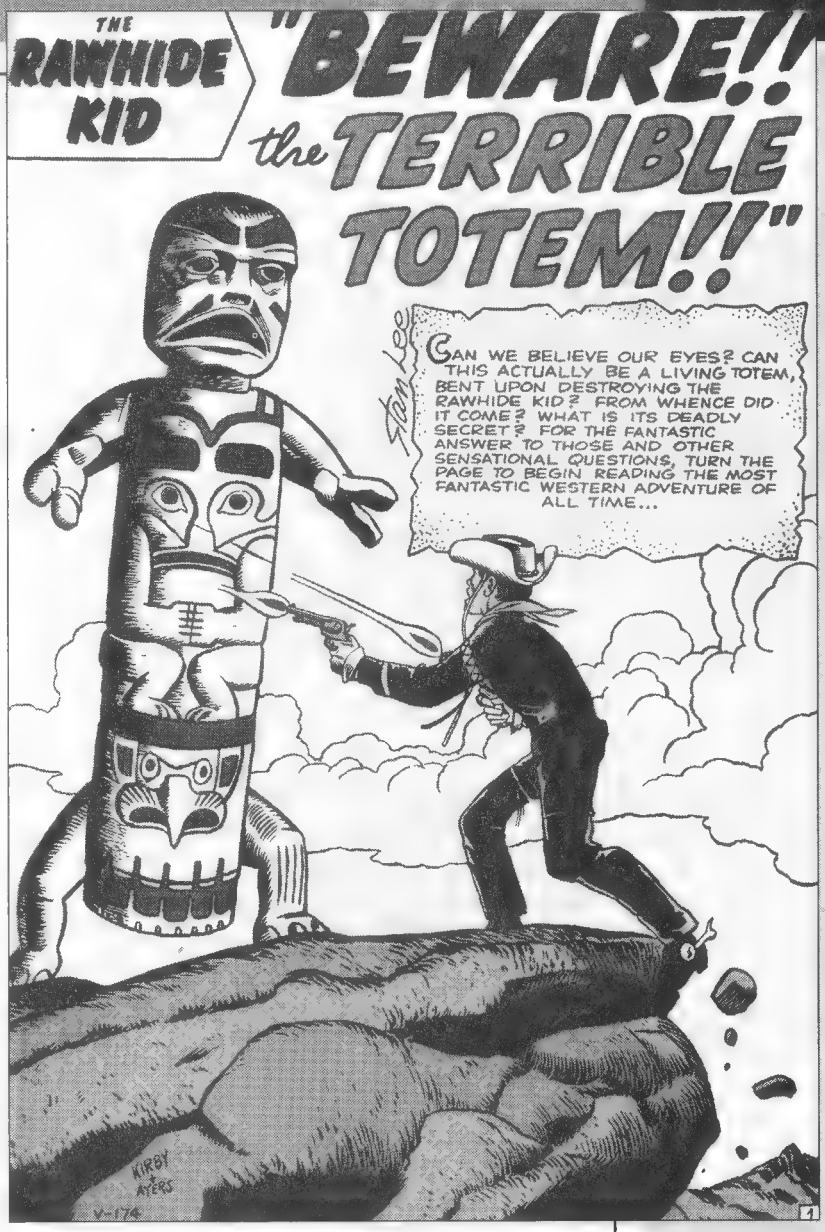
Even after The Kid himself was falsely branded an outlaw, he kept fighting badmen and

YOU DIDN'T THINK I'D JUST STAND STILL AND WAIT FOR YOUR PUNCH, DID YOU?
WHUMMP!
UGH!
NOW LET'S SEE WHAT YOU ALL LOOK LIKE WITHOUT THOSE MASKS!
I WOULDN'T EVEN SOIL MY HANDS BY TOUCHIN' YUH WHEN I CAN LIFT 'EM OFF THIS WAY!
CRACK!
CRACK!
CRACK!
TAKE A LOOK, FOLKS--LOOK AT THE FACES OF OUR BRAVE COURAGEOUS BANDITS! NOW THAT THEY'RE FACING A GUN, WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THEIR NERVE?
D-DON'T SHOOT ANY MORE!
PLEASE-- WHEN I FELT THAT BULLET RIP MUH MASK OFF--I-I NEAR JUMPED OUTTA MUH SKIN!
6
AND SO, NOT LONG AFTERWARDS--
PLEASE HAVE ANOTHER PIECE OF THIS HOME-MADE CAKE, YOU DEAR BOY!
ALWAYS REMEMBER, TOMMY-- A GUN IS NEITHER GOOD NOR BAD! IT DEPENDS ON WHO IS WEARING IT! IN THE HANDS OF THE RAWHIDE KID, IT IS SOMETHING WONDERFUL!
I'LL NEVER FORGET, PAW!
FOLKS, ONE THING I LOVE IS A HAPPY ENDING!
The END

protecting innocents.

This Rawhide Kid is best described as a "fantasy Western," the kind of series in which the hero can shoot the masks off stagecoach robbers without harming them and do battle with a walking, talking totem pole. The stories are fun, sometimes melodramatic, sometimes poignant. The action is classic Kirby choreography, complemented by the trail-gritty inking of Dick Ayers, and the dialogue is Stan the Man at his snappiest. In later years, Larry Lieber would make *Rawhide Kid* his own for a long and entertaining run, but these Lee and Kirby stories hold a special place in my heart.

Three stories need to be singled out for special mention here. Published exactly a year apart, "Beware! The Rawhide Kid" and "The Origin of the Rawhide Kid" are the same story by the same creators. The number of pages is the same, the number of panels on the pages is the same, every caption and speech balloon is the same. The only thing different about them is that Kirby redrew every panel in retelling the Kid's origin. A shot of the Kid's hand as he shoots cans off a fence in the original was redrawn from behind the fence to show the Kid in full figure for the second version. Yet every panel in each version is effective and powerful storytelling. You could study these two stories for hours.


THE RAWHIDE KID
"BEWARE!! the TERRIBLE TOTEM!!"
Stan Lee
CAN WE BELIEVE OUR EYES? CAN THIS ACTUALLY BE A LIVING TOTEM, BENT UPON DESTROYING THE RAWHIDE KID? FROM WHENCE DID IT COME? WHAT IS ITS DEADLY SECRET? FOR THE FANTASTIC ANSWER TO THOSE AND OTHER SENSATIONAL QUESTIONS, TURN THE PAGE TO BEGIN READING THE MOST FANTASTIC WESTERN ADVENTURE OF ALL TIME...
KIRBY & AYERS
V-174
1

The third story — "A Legend Is Born!" — is one of my favorite comics stories period. It's an amazing parable about how even eyewitnesses can get the facts wrong. After a barroom showdown, the combatants, including the town's sheriff, describe The Rawhide Kid as a giant of a man with guns as big as cannons, fists the size of sledgehammers, and a voice like the growl of a lion. But it's Stan who gets the last word:

For the Record:

The Rawhide Kid had an usually low, mild voice! He was five feet, three inches, in his stocking feet, and had never in his life weighed more than one hundred and twenty-five pounds! His hands were normal size, a mite on the small side, maybe, and he carried no more than two regulation Colt .45s!

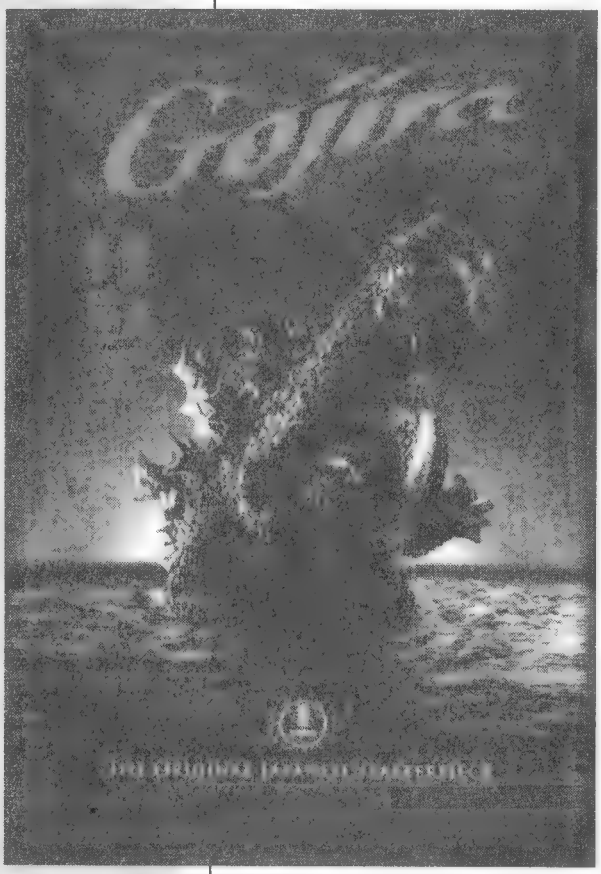
But human nature is what it is and men will always color what they say! That is why none of the records really agree about the Rawhide Kid — that is how legends are born!

The Rawhide Kid of Lee, Kirby, Ayers, and Lieber is one of the great Marvel heroes. I'm thrilled to have his earliest adventures collected in such a handsome and sturdy book. Also included in the book are non-series Western stories drawn by such Silver Age stalwarts as Ayers, Don Heck, Paul Reinman, and the team of Ross Andru and Mike Esposito, as well as the text stories that, thanks to 1960s postal regulations, ran in every issue until they were replaced by letters columns.

Marvel Masterworks: Rawhide Kid Vol. 1 earns the full five out of five Tonys. Keep them coming, Marvel.

www.marvel.com

Gojira (DVD) released by Classic Media



Gojira, the original Japanese version of the film that became *Godzilla, King of the Monsters* in America, has come to DVD in the U.S. as part of a two-disc set that includes the American version. This is the first time the original has been legitimately available in the United States. Produced and distributed by Classic Media, the *Gojira/Godzilla* set went on sale in early September with a list price of $19.98.

The difference between the two films are striking. *Gojira*, a "A" picture in its native Japan, is a dark thriller that uses the title monster to recall the devastation of atomic-bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki while expressing its audience's fear that such horror could come again. Indeed, one of the movie's inspirations was the 1954 death of a sailor from acute radiation exposure following the first test of an American thermonuclear device.

Godzilla, King of the Monsters, the U.S. version of the movie, eliminated almost all references to the bombings, removed an eerily resonant sequence of politicians arguing the public's right to full knowledge of the approaching menace, and trimmed character-building scenes for such key characters as the scientist Serizawa, young lovers Emiko and Ogata, and Emiko's father, a scientist who opposes the planned killing of Gojira.

Gojira's running time is just under 96 minutes; *Godzilla*'s is 81 minutes. New scenes starring Raymond Burr and shot-from-the-back stand-ins for the original Japanese stars were filmed in a Los Angeles studio and cleverly inserted into the film. While *Godzilla* may lack some of the serious intent of *Gojira*, it's still a classic monster movie.

The two-disc set includes plenty of extras. There are: feature-length audio commentaries by Godzilla experts Ed Godziszewski and Steve Ryfle; original theatrical trailers; and two newly produced shorts, one on the development of the Godzilla story and the other on making of the Godzilla suit. The audio commentary for *Godzilla* includes an interview with Terry Morse Jr., one of the editors on the U.S. version and the son of that version's director. Rounding out the package is a 16-page booklet containing photos and further information on the two versions.

The *Gojira/Godzilla* set is a terrific buy, marred only by the lesser picture quality of the original. Toho's film stock of the era wasn't the best, making the restoration of *Gojira* somewhat less than successful. Despite my disappointment in the quality of the picture, I'm thankful for the set. It's a must-have for Godzilla fans and, as such, earns four Tonys.

November will bring two more Classic Media releases: *Godzilla Raids Again*, containing the 1955 Japanese version of the movie and the 1959 American release and *Mothra vs. Godzilla*, also containing both the Japanese and American versions. Priced at $19.98 each and featuring commentaries and other extras, these are also essential purchases for the true Godzilla fanatic.

Excuse me while I add them to my Amazon wish list.

TONY ISABELLA, comics writer and author, has been appearing in *CBG* since #3 in 1971. Review items can be sent to P.O. Box 1502, Medina, OH 44258. Check out his website at **www.wfcomics.com/tony**, or e-mail him at **tony@wfcomics.com!**

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NEW FROM CLAYPOOL

CLAYPOOL COMICS

ELVIRA® #162

GEE WHIZ! THESE THINGS ARE FILTHY!
WHAT CAN I SAY? I'M A VICTIM OF WRITERS WITH DIRTY MINDS! WHICH REMINDS ME--YOU'RE NANCY KLEW, GIRL DETECTIVE, RIGHT?
GUILTY AS CHARGED.
THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT--BUT I ALSO THOUGHT YOU WERE, Y'KNOW... A FICTIONAL CHARACTER?
Elvira is © and ™ 2006 Queen B Productions

When Elvira's mailbox is burgled by mystical bandits, girl detective Nancy Klew takes charge, whether Elvira likes it or not, in **"Enigma Don't Pay the Rent!"** Also, **"Night of the Living Threads!!"**

SOULSEARCHERS AND COMPANY #80

Kelly, Janocz, and Gabriel are on the trail of Zeke, Gabriel's opposite number, and it leads to an exclusive prep school for evil wizards, headmistressed by the devilish Vanessa, in **"Too Cruel for School!"**

ARE THESE THREE PART OF "THE GAME," SAM? IS THAT WHY THEY'RE HERE-- TO PLAY?
THAT'S RIGHT, FRED. THEY CAME TO PLAY.
POINT THAT WAND ELSEWHERE, OKAY, MERLIN?
©2006 Claypool Comics/Boffin Books and Second Age, Inc., and Richard Howell

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REVIEWS

PICK OF THE MONTH COMIC BOOK

Star Wars: The Return of Tag & Bink — Special Edition

Dark Horse

$2.99, color, 22 pgs., available now

Writer: Kevin Rubio; Artist: Lucas Marangon

reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★★

Who says you can't do comedy based on *Star Wars*? (You don't have to be a *Star Wars* geek to understand and appreciate it, but it doesn't hurt.) In the vein of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, George Lucas' epic saga is told from the point of view of Tag and Bink. Truly, it's theater of the absurd.

So they were the Emperor's royal guards during the final battle between Luke and Darth Vader in *Return of the Jedi*, eh? Just as they were in Jabba's palace, disguised as Boba Fett and a Skiff guard, huh? I can suspend disbelief and have a good laugh. Some of the lines are delivered dead-on. I won't spoil them for you here.

The story features cameos from the Cylons of *Battlestar Galactica* (the original series) fame, Big Boy (the restaurant mascot), and Yogi Bear and Boo-Boo (dancing with Ewoks, no less). It also pokes fun at various controversies and explains away some continuity bugs. One example is the way it adapts the ending of *Jedi*, when Luke sees the spirits of Obi-Wan, Yoda, and Anakin. However, both the old version of Anakin and the Hayden Christiansen version of Anakin (which appears on the DVD version) appear, staring at one another in confusion. Funny stuff.

If you want a good laugh, pick this up. You won't regret it.

www.darkhorse.com

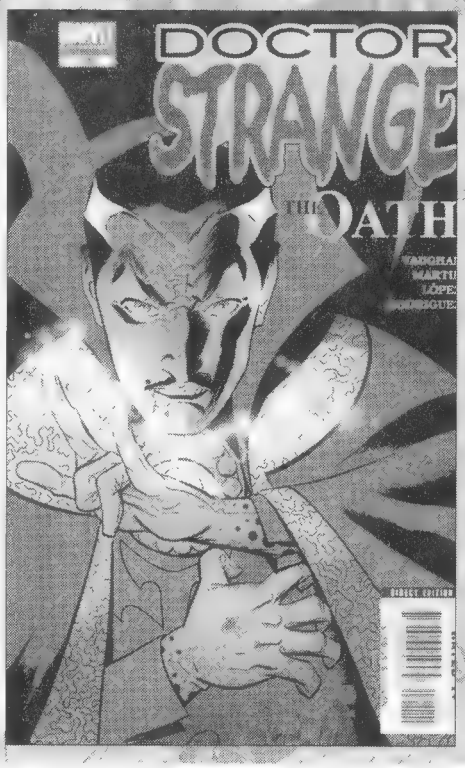
Doctor Strange: The Oath #1

Marvel

$2.99, color, 32 pgs., available now

Writer: Brian K. Vaughan; Artist: Marcos Martin

reviewed by **S.A. Bennett** ★★★



The waiting room of The Night Nurse, medic to the super-hero community, receives an improbable patient with an unlikely injury; Dr. Strange with a gunshot wound. In this issue we learn how, why, and by whom and see him face unearthly perils to save his oldest friend from something even he can't overcome.

Doctor Strange has never enjoyed long-term success, partially because he's thought to be too removed from ordinary human concerns (i.e., "too cosmic"). And partially because it's hard shaking the assumption that he's a long-winded guy who points a lot. The general consensus among fans is that he's easy to appreciate but difficult to care about.

But Brian Vaughan makes us care, not just about him, but also his manservant Wong (Who would have thought?), plus he grounds the mystical elements in just enough of the real world we're willing to emotionally invest ourselves in his struggles. And newcomer Marcos Martin provides some nice art, giving us a Doctor Strange who's classic right down to the black polka dots on his orange gloves.

www.marvel.com

The Boys #1-3

DC/WildStorm

$2.99, color, 32 pgs., available now

Writer: Garth Ennis

Artist: Darick Robertson

reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★½

Anyone who has read Garth Ennis' work knows what the man is capable of when it comes to an entertaining bloodbath of a story, accompanied by well-done and incredibly detailed art — in this case, provided by Darick Robertson. And that's what they'll find in *The Boys*. The problem is, it's pretty much the same stuff Ennis has done in other series.

Fans of Ennis will likely love this series; it's got the requisite entertaining plot and laugh-out-loud dialogue combined with graphic violence, sex, and language that make his stories tick. Unfortunately, there's nothing new here. Sure, these are new characters and this is a new situation, but not by much.

Understand, I've been an Ennis fan since *Preacher*, one of my favorite series. And I'm all smiles when the graphic violence and everything else is done well — which it is here. But at some point — or perhaps I'm just getting old — it'd be nice to see more, something the reader hasn't seen before from the admittedly prolific Ennis.

And I'm sure that'll happen. It just didn't happen with *The Boys*.

www.dcomics.com

Ms. Marvel #7

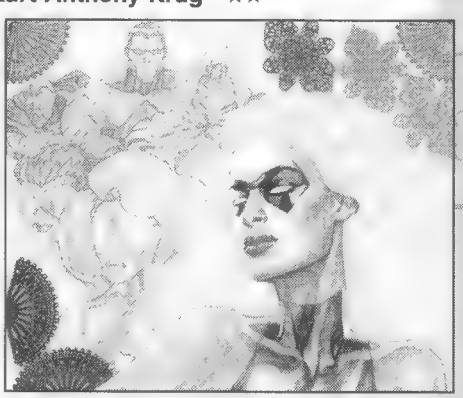
Marvel

$2.99, color, 25 pgs., available now

Writer: Brian Reed

Artists: Roberto De La Torre, Jonathan Sibal

reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★



Another ubiquitous "Civil War" tie-in finds Ms. Marvel and Wonder Man — two of Iron Man's pro-registration troops — chasing Araña, The Shroud, and the Julia Carpenter Spider-Woman after the latter two have turned their backs on Iron Man's cause and decide to head for Canada.

It's surprising how brutal Wonder Man was with The Shroud, pulling him out of a speeding car and bashing his head against the concrete. Ms. Marvel then blasted him while he was down.

There needs to be more of an emotional reaction from Ms. Marvel and Wonder Man now that they're hunting down their former Avengers teammates.

True, they're following orders, but this has got to be painful for them.

Brian Reed must have a thing for characters named Spider-Woman since he's co-writing the original one's eponymous series.

Reed fleshes out Julia Carpenter's character a lot and even has her dating The Shroud. He actually makes her a likable character.

www.marvel.com

American Splendor #1

DC/Vertigo

$2.99, b/w, 32 pgs., available now
Writer: Harvey Pekar
Artists: Various
reviewed by **Brett Weiss** ★★★

American Splendor is essentially the same brand of matter-of-fact, autobiographical comic book it was prior to the Vertigo imprint, but with slicker packaging and some ads for videogames (only on the covers, so the stories aren't disrupted). Kudos to DC for picking up Pekar's everyman tales of angst, woe, and the occasional victory.

Illustrated by Ty Templeton, "What Happened to Your Parents?" is the depressing story of Pekar's folks succumbing to Alzheimer's. "Delicacy," with art by Hilary Barta, is a two-pager about a woman eating a cupcake while reading a popular, controversial book. "The Day's Highlights" is drawn by Dean Haspiel and finds Harvey dealing with his foster daughter, his runaway cats, and his writing career. Finally, "Socialist" (with art by Greg Budgett and Gary Dumm) pits Harvey against an airline stewardess trying to sell him a bag of peanuts.

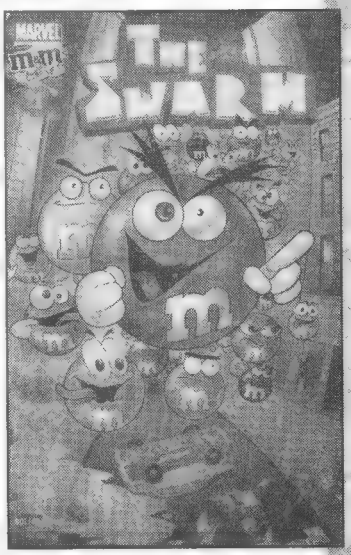
Pekar's scripts will turn off some, but his ordinary observances will resonate with others — especially seasoned readers who have struggled with the things he gripes about. Nice variety of art, as well.

www.dccomics.com

The Swarm

Marvel/M&M's Minis

Free, color, 34 pgs., available now
Writer: Todd DeZago
Artists: Ron Lim, Pat Davidson
reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★★



The Swarm is a 34-page ad for M&M's new candy, but it's at least a mildly entertaining commercial. The little M&M's accidentally create Master M, a candy monstrosity. Master M should've been the next beloved candy, but the frantic members of The Swarm ruin him. He then becomes hellbent on revenge and destroying the little candies. It's actually not a bad comic book for one that shamelessly plugs candy.

Todd DeZago does a nice job setting up situations for the candies to fight. The Swarm is divided by color and then sent to various locations to do battle with monstrosities created by Master M. The Swarm are named after their variation of color: the blue ones are called Cyan, Laz, Prussian, *etc.* The little Swarm pieces all have personalities and it's probably the longest single-issue comic book Marvel has released in the last few years. It is a 34-page ad for candy, but it's probably one of the best I've read. If you're sitting at a convention (candy, comic, or otherwise) and you happen to see one, I don't think you'll be sorry you picked it up.

www.marvel.com

Mystery in Space #1

DC

$3.99, color, 32 pgs., available now
Writer: Jim Starlin; Artists: Shane Davis, Matt Banning
reviewed by **Tim Lasiuta** ★★★

Jim Starlin has always been a big picture kind of guy. From his early galaxy-spanning *Captain Marvel* tales to his *The Weird* miniseries, his forte is epics. And this is one here.

When you start off with Captain Comet being psychically "mugged" by three telepaths, it's battle time for our psychic hero. But, as that turns out, a headache is better than being dead. That's where Starlin really gets our attention. It seems that life at Hardcore Station had its good points and bad points. Good people, bad politics. Add a supporting cast of a psychic dog, an interesting companion, and the Eternal Light Corporation. Starlin really packed this story with all things chaotic to pique our interest.

Shane Davis and Matt Banning do a great job on art here. Their battle scenes resonate with action and their close ups are exceptional. Just take a peek at pages 16 and 17.

www.dccomics.com

Spider-Man Family Featuring Spider-Man's Amazing Friends #1

Marvel

$4.99, color, 96 pgs., available now
Writers and artists: Various
reviewed by **Brett Weiss** ★★★

The marquee attraction of this big fat comic book is "Opposites Attack," a 33-pager inspired by the fondly remembered *Spider-Man and His Amazing Friends* animated series from the early 1980s. Spider-Man, Iceman, and Firestar battle The Shocker and a videogame character that has come to life. It's a routine (if enjoyable) tale with the expected minor disputes and love triangle elements one almost always finds in this type of story. Four different pencillers and even more inkers give the story a discombobulated look, but overall it holds together pretty well.

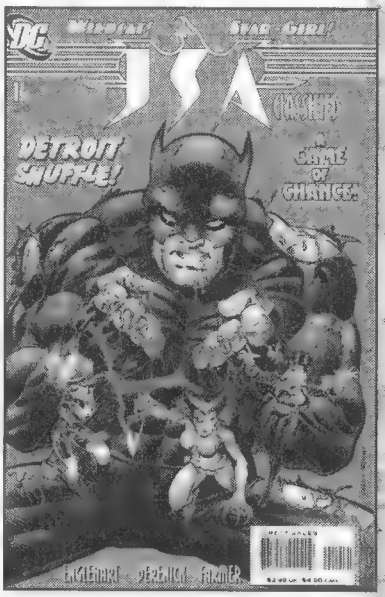
The rest of the issue consists of reprints. "The Mini Marvels in Spidey and His Amazing Co-Workers" (Iceman and Firestar) and "Hydra and Go-Seek" (by Fred Hembeck) match the light tone of the main story and are good for laughs. Then, there's "Castles in the Air," a more serious yarn, in which a truly heroic Spider-Man shows compassion for a misunderstood creature. Rounding out the issue is the ill-fitting (though well written and nicely drawn) origin of Spider-Man 2099.

www.marvel.com

JSA Classified #14-16

DC

$2.99, color, 32 pgs., available now
Writer: Steve Englehart
Artists: Tom Derenick, Mark Farmer
reviewed by **Tim Lasiuta** ★★★



Steve Englehart's follows events from *JLA Classified* with this *JSA Classified* trilogy, and what a story it is.

Amos Fortune's arena of death's main combatant is Ted "Wildcat" White. Captured by The Stellarator and "hypnotized" to be a pawn of Fortune's, he takes on all comers powered by cosmic energy. The Flash, Green Lantern, Vixen, and finally Star Girl give it their all to defeat their friend no matter what the cost. If Fortune wins, the world loses. Vixen and Gypsy work in the astral realm and push this battle one dimension beyond. But, that's all I'm gonna say.

Well conceived. Well written. Well plotted. Englehart gives "A Game of Chance" every trump card he can, and deals aces up! The art by Tom Derenick and Mark Farmer falls flat only on the crowd scenes, but is spectacular on the action sequences. Mike Zeck and Jerry Ordway contribute great covers too.

www.dccomics.com

The Escapists #1-4

Dark Horse

$2.99, color, 32 pgs., available now
Writer: Brian K. Vaughan
Artists: Steve Rolston, Jason Shawn Alexander
reviewed by **Timothy J. Wood** ★★★

Jumping off from the conceit that made *The Adventures of the Escapist* anthology so much fun, this series follows the escapades of Maxwell Roth, who inherits his late father's Escapist collection and infatuation, using his inheritance to buy the rights to the long-dormant character. He recruits artist Case Weaver and, with the help of friend-protector-letterer Denny Jones, sets out to publish a new series of *Escapist* comics. A promotional stunt goes awry, garnering much more attention than they anticipated, resulting in renewed interest in the character from a not entirely benevolent media conglomerate.

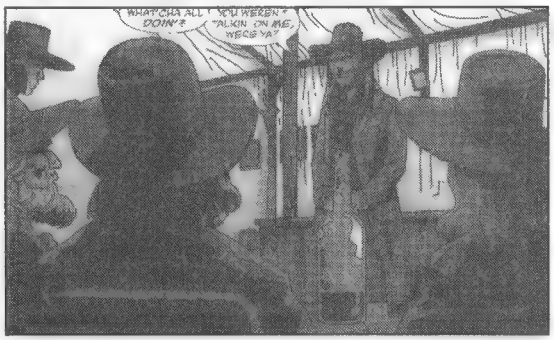
Dark Horse took some flack for failing to make it clear that the first issue actually reprinted a story that appeared in the final issue of the anthology. That was arguably necessary, however, for the story to hold together — and it does, in the tradition of misfits being thrown together to create something better than any one of them is capable of. Max and Case's awkward relationship is well-handled, and the plot elements fall into place in a succinct, believable fashion. Best of all is Jason Shawn Alexander's rendering of Case and Max's updated *Escapist* comic, which is moody and dark and often interwoven with the main story.

www.darkhorse.com

Loveless #10

DC/Vertigo

$2.99, color, 32 pgs., available now
Writer: Brian Azzarello
Artist: Marcelo Frusin
reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★★



Wes, Seth, Julia, Abram — one's a sheriff, two are corpses, and the other's an old guy whose role has yet to be determined. Azzarello's dark Western continues with nightmares, flashbacks, and buckets of blood all around.

As Wes tries to deal with a pair of murders in the town of Blackwater, he's also fighting the public opinion that he's the murderer. No small task, but his fearless (and, in some ways, conscienceless) tactics and philosophy appear to be keeping him alive and in charge, though for how long remains to be seen. Time is taking its toll on the townfolk and his sanity.

Frusin's shadowy art illustrates the monster and the man within Wes, as the reader waits to see which one will emerge from page to page.

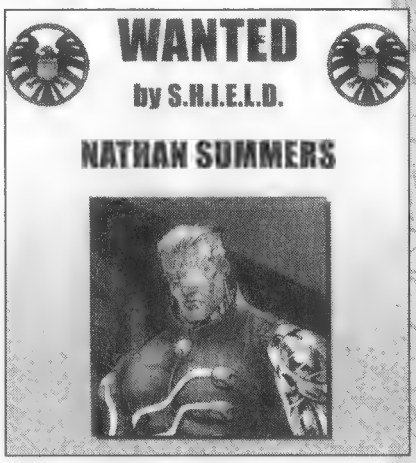
As with most Vertigo titles, this maintains a high standard in both story and art. This series in particular has proven popular and found a niche among mainstream readers. This, the second part of the current arc, appears on the same path and indicates good things for fans of *Loveless*.

www.dccomics.com

Civil War Files

Marvel

$3.99, color, 48 pgs., available now
Writers and artists: Various
reviewed by **Brett Weiss** ★★½



Other than a striking new cover by Steve McNiven, *Civil War Files* doesn't contain a lick of new art. The headshots contained within are from comic books published during the last 30 years or so, giving the issue a disjointed look. This is especially apparent within the group entries, such as Humberto Ramos' ugly, exaggerated Namor rendering sitting alongside more traditionally illustrated shots of Vashti, Namora, and Kormok.

The writing (lead by Anthony Flamini), on the other hand, is new and remarkably consistent. And there's a whole lot of it, considering that each page gives exhaustive information on key players in the epic *Civil War* saga, from Arachne to The Avengers to The Human Torch to Spider-Man. Told from Tony Stark's point of view (via briefings to the president), the entries give hero histories, updates, and biographies, providing new readers and veterans alike the scoop on how each character fits into Marvel's widespread tale of brother against brother.

For a text-heavy release, *Civil War Files* is surprisingly readable, even in large chunks.

www.marvel.com

The Irredeemable Ant-Man #1

Marvel

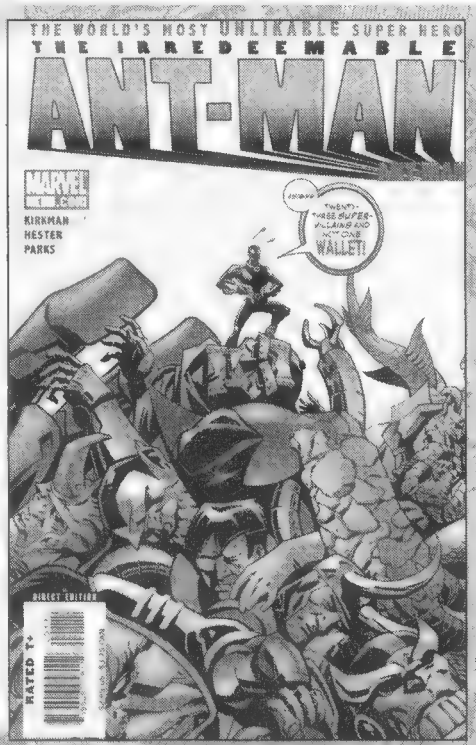
$2.99, color, 32 pgs., available now
Writer: Robert Kirkman; Artist: Phil Hester
reviewed by **S.A. Bennett** ★★★

Through the eyes of two low level functionaries, we see everyday life aboard the fabled S.H.I.E.L.D. helicarrier — and it's not that great. Until these two spear-carriers of destiny guard the wrong door and discover the new Ant-Man suit Dr. Henry Pym is making for the agency. Each of them gets a chance to try it on with substantially different results.

On the one hand, Robert Kirkman absolutely adores the Marvel universe and shows it with fanboy zeal. (He carefully sets pivotal moments of the first issue between panels of the "Enemy of the State" storyline from *Wolverine*.) On the other, he can't stop tweaking it, including during a poker game where one player casually announces Nick Fury is an urban legend.

In a field entirely too crowed with super-hero comics, Kirkman and artist Phil Hester have come up with a wholly original approach to the material. Hester in particular should be commended for the way he fills page after page with up to as many as 13 panels without them ever seeming cramped.

www.marvel.com



Rush City #2

DC

$2.99, color, 32 pgs., available now
Writer: Chuck Dixon; Artist: Timothy Green II
reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★★

This issue begins a new chapter in the life of the man named Rush, as he encounters multiple factions and even more double-crosses, all with Black Canary in the middle of the action.

While the action and plots are entertaining without wowing, the backstory on Rush ups the curiosity level a few notches. So far, his past — and what it is that turned him into the philanthropist-for-hire that he is — has appeared in brief flashbacks indicating serious shock, pain, and regret. Granted, sounds familiar, but Dixon's writing boasts creativity to spare, so this element of the story is one worth waiting out.

Green's art complements the story. The action looks fast-paced and ever-frenetic, just as it's meant to be. (The name of the series is *Rush City*, after all.) Green is well-suited to this job, and the job is suited for him.

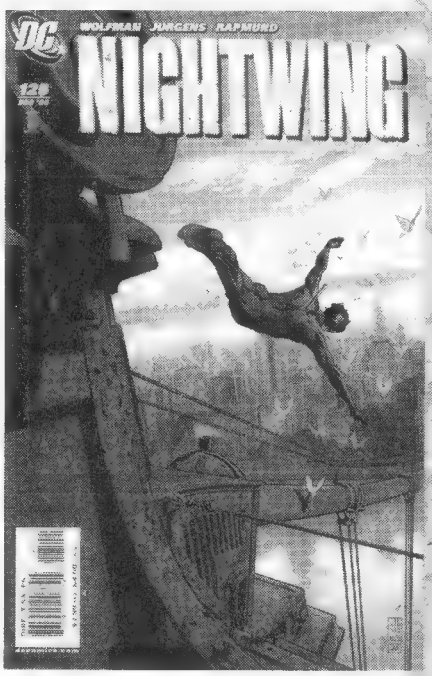
Nevertheless, Dixon & Co. need to incorporate more backstory on Rush, and soon. What makes him tick is obviously the key, and filling pages with action — even such entertaining action as this — will stagnate before too long.

www.dccomics.com

Nightwing #125

DC

$2.99, color, 32 pgs., available now
Writer: Marv Wolfman
Artist: Dan Jurgens, Norm Rapmund
reviewed by **Tim Lasiuta** ★★★



Murder is a strange business. Sometimes you're at the wrong place at the wrong time. That would describe Raptor. The big question is: What does it take to convince do-gooders like Nightwing that you didn't kill any of the victims?

Welcome back, Marv Wolfman. It was more than 25 years ago that you first took Robin/Nightwing into *The New Teen Titans* and transformed Nightwing into a hero to be reckoned with. "Targets, Part 1" is one heck of a story with one great supporting cast. Zen and Ryan should prove to be interesting diversions for our tired super-hero. Also, just what does LexCorp have to do with the murders?

www.dccomics.com

The Darkness #1

Image/Top Cow

Free, color, 28 pgs., available now
Writer: Paul Jenkins
Artists: Dale Keown, Matt Milla
reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★★½

Could Image's Top Cow Studios have finally seen the light? Instead of charging their fans $10 or more for a sketchbook, they actually gave a whole comic book away! Good for them.

This latest relaunch is written by Paul Jenkins and drawn by Dale Keown. Our hero is a hit-man who gained a dark power. It's pretty sharp, although Jenkins' Mafia-speak could use some work and I don't buy for a second that the mob guys would blow up an orphanage unless there was some major cash involved. (Even then, I don't think most made guys would do it.)

Keown's art is stellar and there's plenty of butt-kicking. Additional features include a map of the bloodline of the main character. The power of "The Darkness" goes back through history. This is infinitely more interesting then the pseudo-super-hero costume the character appeared in earlier. We don't even see the costume this whole issue and it makes the story play much better. With Jenkins at the helm, I have no doubt The Darkness can do some damage this time around. Score one for Top Cow.

www.imagecomics.com

OBLIGATORY FIGHT SCENE!

52 #1-26

DC

$2.50@, color, 32 pgs.@, available now
Writers and artists: Various
discussed by **Jim Johnson and John Petty**

Jim Johnson: It's hard to believe that we're already halfway through this much-ballyhooed follow-up to *Infinite Crisis*. Hard to believe for me, at least, because I didn't really think I or anyone else would care much by this point. But, surprisingly, DC has taken this disjointed and fragmented idea and given it a surprising amount of consistency, considering the number of creators required to support multiple weekly storylines. And these B-list character storylines, especially those featuring Booster Gold and Elongated Man, have actually been enjoyably captivating. Yes, O Numeric Naysayer, I said I've actually been enjoying this. Surely it's better than even you expected.

Petty: Wha … oh, sorry, you just jolted me out of my boredom-induced coma. Great Googly Mooglies, but this is an amazing yawn-fest. I can't think of a comics series that I've been less interested in since *Classics Illustrated* #170: *The Story of Yeast*. This takes decompressed storytelling to a whole new level. Someone needs to tell these guys that, even for a book that comes out weekly, *something needs to actually happen in each issue*. I will give them this: the book has come out on schedule for 26 weeks. Props to the editorial and production departments. Unfortunately, there's not a single storyline or character in this whole mess that I actually care about: Really, this'll put you to sleep faster than a brick to the head, and frankly, the brick would be more entertaining.

Johnson: You're right. Now hold still, you won't feel a thing … drat, I missed. OK, let's carry on, then. During the first few months of this series, my feelings weren't too different from yours. But as these individual stories began to take root and blossom, the series became one that I read because I wanted to, not because I was afraid I'd miss something if I didn't. And these stories are supplemented by other mysteries yet to be fully explored, like who or what exactly The 52 is, and the identity of Metropolis' new hero, Supernova. The only reservations I have regarding this comic now are with my local retailer, who pulls it for me every week.

Petty: You sure are easily pleased. Are you sure you weren't the one clocked in the head? Are you telling me you really, honestly care about anything that happens to Renee Montoya or Steel's whiny little niece? The Black Adam storyline is nothing more than a too-long continuation of a story that overstayed its welcome in *JSA*. The death of Booster Gold was the most over-hyped, over-publicized, over-foreshadowed non-event of the last decade. It's amazing that, with the wealth of characters DC has to draw on, they seem to have consciously chosen the flattest, dullest, and most two-dimensional of the lot. This could have been a great opportunity to spotlight a wide range of characters that haven't been seen for a while — The New Gods and The Metal Men are two groups that come to mind — but, unfortunately, that doesn't seem to be happening. More's the pity. Although I do give them points for bringing Ambush Bug back into the fold.

OH, GOOD GOD! HELP LIKE THIS, WE DON'T NEED! WHERE'D THE ALL-LOSERS SQUAD COME FROM?
FROM THE LEXCORP LABS!
FOR THE LAST FEW MONTHS, LUTHOR'S BEEN HANDING OUT SUPER-POWERS LIKE CANDY WITH THAT "EVERYMAN" PROGRAM OF HIS.
METROPOLITANS RIGHT AND LEFT SUDDENLY THINK THEY'RE QUALIFIED TO RUN AMON!
SKEETS? IS THAT YOU?
FIREHAWK, I FOUND SKEETS! BOOSTER GOLD'S LITTLE...ROBOT HELPER-THING! HE'S OVER HERE BY THE RIFT!

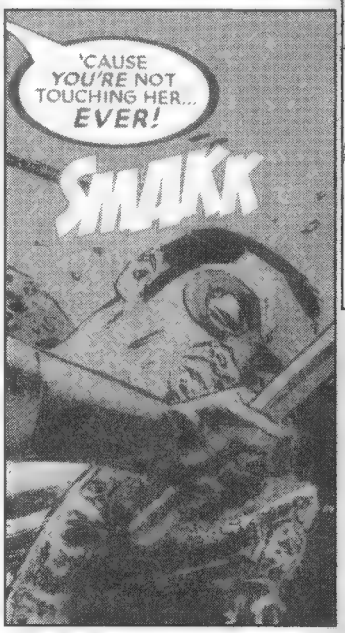
Johnson: You mean the Black Adam story that's introduced two new characters into the DC universe and given us a new version of the Marvel family? Or the story that's finally made Steel an interesting character while taking Lex Luthor to new levels of evil? Or the Booster Gold story that strongly hints that all is not well with DC continuity? Yeah, I care, exactly because they've taken the "flattest, dullest" characters and actually made them interesting. I didn't think it was possible, especially in such a widespread story like this, but I've been won over. So don't trip over that brick, or your stack of 52, on your way out.

www.dccomics.com

Daredevil #88-89

Marvel

$2.99@, color, 32 pgs.@, available now
Writer: Ed Brubaker
Artists: David Aja, Michael Lark
reviewed by **Brett Weiss** ★★½



#88: "The Secret Life of Foggy Nelson" finds Matt Murdock's longtime law partner under protective custody and assumed dead. Foggy regrets his decision to hide and is even ashamed. He knows, ever so mournfully, that he'll never be as brave as The Man without Fear, but he does manage to escape.

#89: "The Devil Takes a Ride" (Part 1) turns the focus back to Matt himself, whose trek to find the lawyer connected to Foggy's supposed death takes him to Monaco, where he uses his ability to cheat at gambling to gain entrance to a party being held by a client of the lawyer in question. Matt dons his Daredevil duds and battles a matador, who, DD assumes, is too young to be *the* Matador.

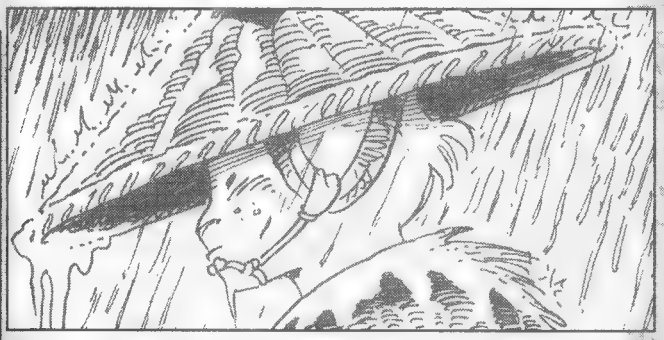
Both issues are dark and dreary, with the brand of muddy, mood-enhancing art that typified Alex Maleev's run on the book. However, at least #89 returns in part to the type of swashbuckling tale not seen in this title in a very long time. A little fun never hurt anyone.

www.marvel.com

Usagi Yojimbo #96-97

Dark Horse

$2.99, b/w, 24 pgs., available now
Writer and artist: Stan Sakai
reviewed by **Timothy J. Wood** ★★★½



Boss Hamanaka is dead and his money chest is empty. His lieutenants rush to not only find the treasure but also fill the vacuum created by Hamanaka's death.

When he comes across some thugs threatening a seemingly defenseless peasant, Usagi can't help but get involved. ("I'm such an idiot," he confesses.) The Rabbit Ronin soon finds that he's saved the no-good son of Hamanaka and not exactly endeared himself to the former henchmen. When another ronin enters the picture, the stage is set for intrigue and mayhem.

As usual, Stan Sakai reveals insights into human nature through his feudal Japanese funny animals.

Greed destroys nearly everyone in the village except Usagi, who has seen its effect in the past and wants no part of the money, even when it's his for the taking.

Sakai manages to do much of this with a minimum of action and also presents several dialogue-less montages that show his mastery of the form.

As the series approaches its 100th issue, it continues to get better, hard as that is to imagine.

www.darkhorse.com

Teen Titans #39

DC

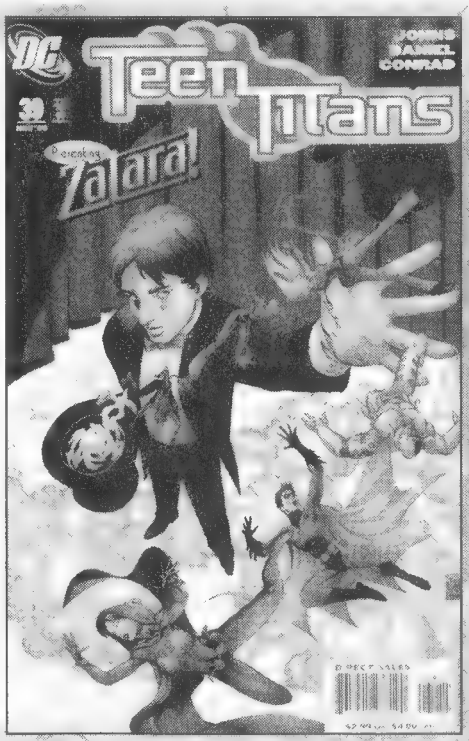
$2.99, color, 32 pgs., available now
Writer: Geoff Johns; Artist: Tony Daniels
reviewed by **S.A. Bennett** ★★

Searching for clues to the whereabouts of missing member Raven, The Titans go on a world tour to visit the heroes who briefly belonged to the group during the year after the events of *Infinite Crisis*. This time they meet with teenage magician Zatara, Miss Martian, and a cute girl Captain Atom analog named Bombshell. (Well, I assume the strain on her shirt is supposed to be an atom; as drawn it looks more like the emblem on Juniper Lee's T-shirt.)

The plot exists as an excuse so we can speed-meet a bunch of fairly unnecessary adolescent counterparts to DC characters who previously never had or needed one. While some at least initially look cool so far, all have had attitudes instead of personalities; Zatara's a jerk, Miss Martian is '50s sit-com perky, and Bombshell likes guys.

The art, only slightly better than adequate, doesn't help a script which sticks the reader into a story overstuffed with people who can't stand each other, though I have to admit there's a final page twist I didn't seem coming.

www.dccomics.com



Small Press Expo raises question:

Whatever happened to mini comics?

by **HEIDI MACDONALD**

In many ways the mini scene has diminished.

I've just returned from the Small Press Expo in Bethesda, and as usual I have a giant stack of books, comics, and minis. It's a very random list of stuff, some of which I sought out, some of which people handed to me. A lot of it was from first timers or creators unknown to me. To be honest, there was a lot of stuff I didn't much like, but I plowed on through to see what's going on with the new breed. Back in the day before the Internet, mini comics, or mail art, were the best way to get to see new unusual creators who would never be able to find a place in the mainstream. In many ways the mini scene has diminished, but going through a big stack of minis at the end of a show is actually still one of my favorite things to do.

***The Mother's Mouth* by Dash Shaw** (Alternative Press, $12.95). A long time ago in this column I reviewed Shaw's *Garden Head*, a very experimental and free-flowing story about an unlikely romance and a young man with his head stuck in the ground. It was odd but promising. With *The Mother's Mouth*, Shaw is equally experimental but more focused. The story is simple: a woman named Virginia quits her job to go to New Orleans to take care of her dying mother, Mary. Once she gets there she meets a musician named Dick who reminds her of her first — and only — love, whom she met in elementary school and who died in a sandbox. All the characters are variations on a theme: regression. Virginia is obsessed with her early life and her own unattractive appearance. She's lost without her mother, but her relationship with the younger, far more attractive Dick causes her more doubts. Dick is obsessed with the music of Michael Jackson, a symbol of kiddie pop at its worst. The mother is obviously losing her life and her memories. Richard vanishes into the dirt. Shaw represents all these states and transitions with a lot of experimental and evocative storytelling devices — children's drawings, diagrams, photos, and text. Many times how the images are juxtaposed says as much as what's in the drawings.

This isn't an easy book to read, and I found Shaw's deliberately crude art detracted somewhat from the story. However, there is something lyrical and haunting about it at the same time. Breath and trees (continuing concerns in Shaw's work) are continuously used to connect the characters — Richard blows on young Virginia's neck; later she and Dick both worry about bad breath as they kiss; and Mary's dying breath is portrayed as a ghost from Pac-Man.

I didn't feel this was an entirely successful work — sometimes it was trying too hard to be diffuse, as with a final reference to "rebirthing therapy," a controversial therapy technique which once resulted in the death of a child. This is a story meant to be felt, not read, and if you can let yourself go enough to feel it, you will be rewarded.

***My Affliction* by Gabrielle Bell** (self-published, no price). A digest-sized self-published mini-comic, you'll have a hard time finding this unless you see Bell at a show. This has been Bell's breakout year, with her appearances in the *MOME* anthology and the collection *Lucky* from Drawn & Quarterly. Her stories are semi-autobiographical but universal enough to be entertaining, and her charming art keeps everything accessible. This is her newest story, a fantasy about a young woman who always falls in love with unavailable men — her "affliction." The story follows a dream-like course as the narrator is dropped from a giant's hand and lands in a dog park, where she's given a dog named Hershey. The story evolves in an odd but linear fashion as the narrator meets a foul-

mouthed parrot and the trucker who taught the bird to swear, has several more unlikely relationships, and makes a final return to the giant's home. The story is told in a six-panel grid format, and Bell's art is simple but expressive, keeping the story clear and enjoyable. It's very funny in spots, and even though it sounds quite random, everything comes together in the end. I enjoyed this, and it's worth seeking out in mini form — or wait for its inevitable publication in a future Bell collection.

I headed towards the Third Avenue medical district walking fair effortless
There must've been something strange about my train because a pack of dogs escaped from their walker and attacked me
Fortunately a dog trainer was nearby
She got them doing tricks. The dog walker was ashamed
I'M SO SORRY THEY JUST WENT BERSERK!
IT'S ALL RIGHT. I WAS ON MY WAY TO THE HOSPITAL ANYWAY
He offered to buy me dinner as an apology but I refused. Finally he convinced me to accept a rottweiler
WELL, IF YOU INSIST
IT'S THE LEAST I CAN DO.
Hershey was good to have with me at night.

***Black Mane* by Michael LaRiccia** (One Time Press, $10). This book won a Xeric Grant, and those are usually worth checking out. (The Xerics are a fund set up by Peter Laird of *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* fame. Each year cartoonists apply for a grant to publish their books, and twice a year a panel awards grants, usually five or six in each batch, to help them self-publish. Previous Xeric winners include Jason Lutes, Megan Kelso, Donna Barr, Lauren Weinstein, Sam Hiti, Derek Kirk Kim and Sonny Liew, so winning one puts you in pretty good company.)

Like so many comics by youngish creators, this story is semi-autobiographical; it stars a young man named Michael. Michael is Italian, but people seem to think he's South Asian or Hispanic and he is often reviled with epithets applied to those groups. His girlfriend is black and he has a typical job with a typical bunch of losers.

The subject of the book is sexism and racism. Michael's girlfriend tells him that he's passive and gets picked on and threatened because of it. The story presents several episodes that Michael observes of sexual aggression of the kind we see in real life every day — men making crude comments about women; a date gone bad when a man thinks the woman is ready to put out just because he gets her to go to his filthy apartment by lying to her; a woman who plays head trips with her possibly abusive boyfriend.

As the story progresses, we see Michael's fantasies, in which the people engaged in these stories become monsters, and he himself becomes a fantasy hero. Of course, by the end of the story he'll be faced with another situation where he can chose to act or remain silent in the real world.

I wanted to like this book, but LaRiccia undercuts the story with an art style that is all but unreadable. His drawing is fine, his characters all individual and sharply observed, but instead of using some kind of regular layout of panels, he goes for chaotic layouts printed against black borders. The result is muddy and hard to follow. To make matters worse, when Michael's violent fantasies burst out, the storytelling is already so confused that there's nowhere to go and things just get more confusing.

This is the kind of book that badly needed an editor, and I realize that as a former editor that's a self-serving comment, but sometimes people need that first reader. If the storytelling had been more effective and the actual incidents shaped into a narrative more, it could have been a very effective, *Crash*-like story about people's hidden and not-so-hidden prejudices. As it is, it's a good attempt.

I do like LaRiccia's art style and story approach a lot; he's a printmaker by trade, and with just a bit more comics craft, he could definitely have something to say.

***Broken Chain* by Aaron F. Gonzalez** (House of October, no price). This is a 21-page excerpt of a planned wordless graphic novel which will be finished next year. Disclosure: Gonzalez was my car-mate for the ride down to Bethesda, so the usual caveats about reviewing pals apply.

In this chapter, we meet a Guy and a Girl. The Guy has a crush on the Girl and is sad because he lost his photo album #4. We see him longing for a bike, arguing with the owner of a bike shop, and then deciding to buy a bike with a broken chain for $10 when he can't afford a new one. Meanwhile, the Girl has found the photo album and is strangely entranced by it, and instead of returning it, she sits under a tree examining it. She doesn't know about the crush, but after the Guy's bike chain breaks and he crashes into the tree, we can see hijinks are going to ensue.

This is just a snippet of a story, and I don't know where it's going to go, but it's pretty cute and easy to read, and I will look for the final product.

***Lisboa 4: Safety on Board* by Kristoffer Kjolberg and Sindre Goksoyr** (Dongery, no price given). Dongery is a collective of Norwegian indie cartoonists; they've been at the last few SPXs. Last year they had one of the hits at the show with a crude but funny mini with a title that I can't repeat in a family magazine about trying to pick up girls in the laundry room. You can probably find out more about them at their website: *www.dongery.no.*

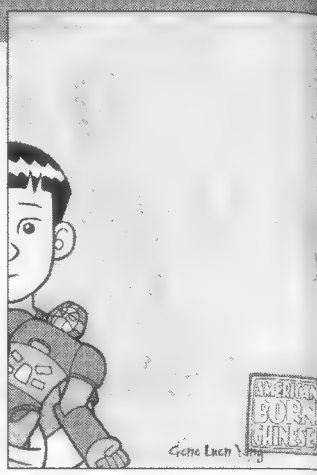
Warning: You will find out much more about them if you speak Norwegian. You can buy Dongery's minis in the United States via Bodega Distribution (*www.bodegadistribution.com/newshop.html*). Anyway this is an oddly shaped flipbook mini (It's as wide as a traditional comic but reads horizontally and is stapled at the top, if that makes any sense.), one in a series of Disney parodies starring Gyro Gearloose and Emil Eagle. In this story, the Gyro character must board a plane to stop Emil's evil plan. The drawing is simple, but the jokes are funny, and it has a bang-up middle panel where both stories converge. Minor fun, but worth a giggle, and plenty of take-offs on airline safety literature. If you come across any Dongery minis, they are all in English, and all are funny.

***Pony Up* by Karen Sneider** (Self-published, no price). Sneider is a cartoonist and comedian, and this is a cute story. A young girl (based on Sneider) goes over to a friend's house, only to find that the friend would rather smoke and drink (and give Karen her first taste of the same) than ride her pet pony. A lesson for all. In a short bonus story, young Karen learns how to pop zits. Honestly, I didn't think anyone had to teach you how to do that. Sneider's art is minimal but cute and she tells stories. That earns a good mark in my book.

This is what I would call a classic mini-comic series.

***Caesar* I-IV by Jeff Sharp** (Self-published, no price; available at *www.flummery.com*). "Caesar never gave anything much thought. He ate. He drank. He slept. He climbed. Ignorance is bliss." This is what I would call a classic mini-comic series. The cartooning is clean, the characters cute, and the stories feature a simple set-up: a hungry lizard and the chatty cricket he's trying to eat. The stories are a few pages long, and end with some kind of vaguely philosophical joke. The covers, like many minis these days, were printed on cardboard via the Gocco, a Japanese mini screen-printing set-up that everyone seems to use to give things that beautiful object look. Caesar is an appealing figure, and I don't know how much time Sharp has to devote to doing these comics (a short mini every year is not much output) but it's the kind of thing that you increasingly find on the Web as a webcomic; I'm surprised he hasn't chosen that route.

***American Born Chinese* by Gene Luen Yang** (First Second, $18.95). This book just recently became the first-ever graphic novel to be a finalist in the prestigious National Book Awards. In the literary world, that's a big deal. The nod was well-deserved. And interestingly, *ABC*, as it is known, first appeared as a mini-comic. So despite my harsh word for some of the minis I got at SPX, I'd rather go through a stack of hand-printed short stories and find a gem like this than a stack of over-rendered franchise comics.



An "American-born Chinese" is a term for someone whose parents came over from Taiwan or China — often raised by professional parents, they are typically expected to be overachievers and tagged with the stereotype of the hard-studying, nerdy Asian. Jin Wang is one such boy. He's just moved to a new school in an almost all-white neighborhood and he has to learn to adjust.

The story is told in three separate threads. There's the story of Jin as he makes friends with the other Asian boy in class, falls in love with a white girl, and goes through the adolescent trauma everyone faces with the added problem of wanting to reject his heritage. Another thread is that of The Monkey King, a traditional figure from Chinese myth, a powerful figure with the Four Major Heavenly Disciplines and mighty fighting skills who is still not treated as an equal by the human gods and goddesses. The final thread is that of Chin-kee, a loud figure who comes to stay with his white cousin and embodies every stereotype anyone ever had about the Chinese, from buckteeth to speech patterns to quoting Chinese proverbs.

As the book progresses, the three threads tie together, all tales of self-loathing and the search for self-acceptance. The Monkey King's tale is told as epic myth, while Chin-Kee's tale is framed as a bad sitcom. In the end, Jin comes to accept who he is, but not without some harsh lessons along the way.

This story fully deserves the honor it received. The art, colored by Lark Pien, is clean and expressive, graceful or full of energy when the story calls for it. It's the writing that really stands out, however — Yang is a wonderful storyteller, and the multi-levels of the structure build on each other, from young Jin's desire to be a Transformer to the Monkey King's realization that his true identity as a monkey is nothing to be ashamed of. It's powerful, tender, and fully realized. If I had read this as a mini, I like to think I would have liked it, but reading the story in one chunk, it's a wonderful story.

Owner of enough convention badges to run her own show, online and print journalist **HEIDI 'ACE' MacDONALD** has written for *CBG* for more than two decades. Her first column appearing in #490 in 1983. Drop her a line at **comix-ace@aol.com**!

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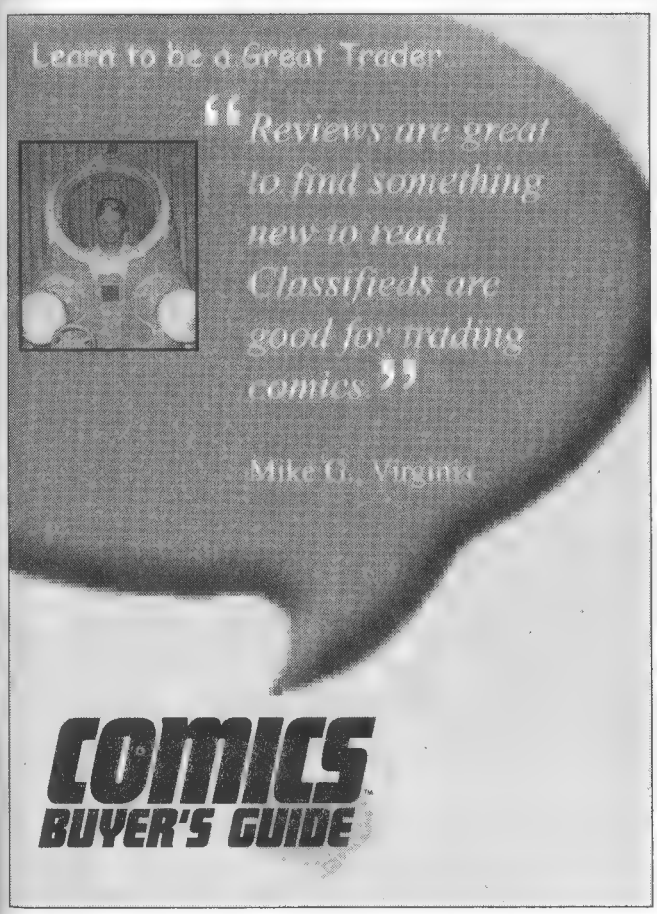
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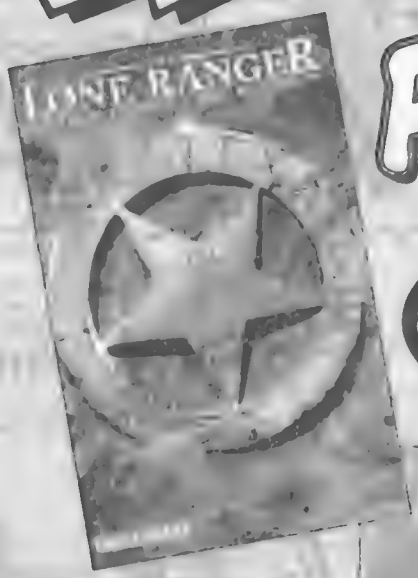
REVIEWS



PICK OF THE MONTH INDY

The Lone Ranger #1-2

Dynamite Entertainment

$2.99, color, 32 pgs., available now

Writer: Ed Matthews; Artist: Sergio Carriello

reviewed by **Tim Lasiuta** ★★★★

The Lone Ranger is one of the most successful radio-to-comic-to-television-to-merchandising characters. The Masked Man has also garnered the most fiercely loyal fan following in his more than 70-year existence. That's why this comic book had to be good to win new fans and pique the interest of older ones.

It could have been based on the disastrous '80s film but it's not. It could have suffered from an overzealous artist but it doesn't. It could have ignored the "legend" of the Lone Ranger but it doesn't.

The story by Ed Matthews is compelling enough to keep even die-hard fans reading. Sure, he introduces some new elements into the standard plotline, but most make sense. The art by Sergio Carriello is outstanding.

There is more blood shown than in previous incarnations, so be aware of that.

www.dynamiteentertainment.com

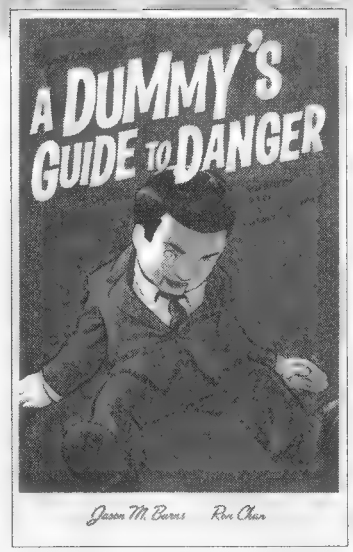
A Dummy's Guide to Danger #1

Viper Comics

$3.25, color, 32 pgs., available now

Writer: Jason M. Burns; Artist: Ron Chan

reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★



Cool title and an entertaining concept make this story worthy of a thumbs-up. Meet Johnny, an action hero with a dummy for a sidekick — as in an actual ventriloquist's dummy. The two have a like-hate relationship, much of it based on testosterony fun.

Though the story is enjoyable in parts, as a whole it fails to captivate. Turning the pages, at times, seemed forced rather than preferred.

The pros include the dialogue between the two protagonists, despite the macho overkill. Ron Chan's art also delivers, especially on the sculpted facial expressions of Johnny.

The backup story is very cool — in fact, so is the story behind the backup story. Viper held a contest seeking creator talent, and the winner received having the story published in this issue. So "The Strange Meeting of Lucille and Jimmy" by Erik Valdez y Alanis appears here. The art style is incredibly unusual (in a good way), and the story manages to be both disturbingly macabre and cute at the same time. (Don't ask me how.) I look forward to seeing more from this creator.

www.vipercomics.com

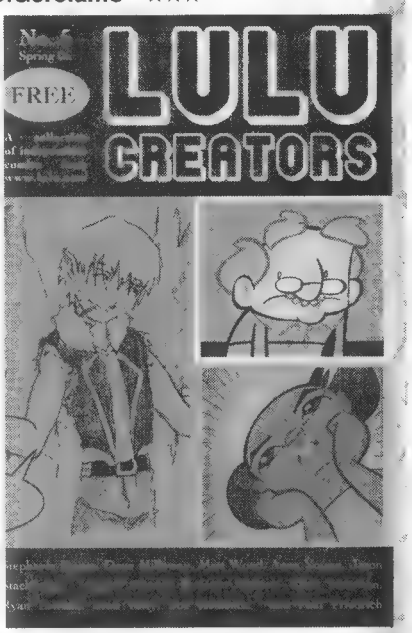
Lulu Creators #5

www.lulu.com

Free, color, 32 pgs., available now

Writers and artists: Various

reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★★★



This is a compilation comic featuring the various creators publishing at Lulu.com. Lulu is sort of like a vanity press, in that its customers are the creators. They even include a little comic on how it's actually cheaper to use Lulu. It doesn't seem like a bad deal, assuming one has a nice comic book.

By far, the story I liked the most was the first one by Ryan Estrada. It's an illustrated real-life story with one of the tsunami victims. He talks about the disaster and how it tore his life apart, but ultimately he realizes how lucky he has it.

Other stories include one about the end of the world, one featuring angels, one about kids living in a space station, and snippets of various webcomics including *The Dada Detective*. The art covered a range of styles. A few pieces look a little unpolished, but the ideas, overall, seemed pretty rock-solid. If you see this at a con, pick it up; it's worth reading.

www.lulu.com

G.I. Joe: Declassified #1

Devil's Due

$4.95, color, 48 pgs., available now

Writer: Larry Hama

Artists: Pat Quinn, Valentine DeLandro

reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★

G.I. Joe creator Larry Hama continues his story about how the G.I. Joe team was formed and the missions that occurred before Marvel's *G.I. Joe, A Real American Hero* #1.

Hama fleshes out the characters of such lesser-developed Joes as Short-Fuse and Flash. He also reveals a blemish on team leader Hawk's record. Hama even throws in cameos by Future Joes, including second officer Duke (which makes plenty of sense), Roadblock, Chuckles, Ace, and Wild Bill.

There's even an original Joe readers didn't previously know about named Shooter, whose mission is to bail Stalker's team out of Sierra Gordo. No, that's not a ret-con job. On the inside cover page, there's artwork reprinted from Marvel's *G.I. Joe* #1 that mentions all the Joes, including Shooter. However, a hand obscures Shooter's photo, so we don't see him (or was it her)? This was probably an in-joke referring to Jim Shooter, Marvel's then-editor-in-chief. However, Hama actually does something productive with this in-joke in this comic.

You can tell Hama's having fun revisiting these characters. It shows. It brings back memories of the early days of G.I. Joe before the team had too many members and was encumbered by plenty of unrealistic garbage.

www.devilsdue.net

Last Writes #1

Acronym Comics

$3.50, b/w, 32 pgs., available now
Writers and artists: Various
reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★★½

This is an anthology book of dark stories. "The Suicide Note" is about a writer on the brink and a talking typewriter. This story had the cleanest art of the three.

"Afflicted" is about a Salem woman during the witch trials and the Devil. The art here was too esoteric for my tastes, but it was short.

"Frostbite" is about World War II soldiers and a vampire Nazi in the woods. The art on the last story was a little rough, but I felt overall the creative teams gave me a good bang for my buck in a *Tales from the Crypt* kind of way.

The comics medium can always use more anthologies, so support this one. For some reason, there's no price on the cover, but there was one on the website. (Guys, you should always put some kind of price on it, even if you give it away.) Acronym has lots of upcoming titles on its website, including *Citizen Elvis*. These creators may be up and coming and ones to keep your eye on.

www.acronymcomics.com

Bad Moon Rising #1

Avatar

$3.99, color, 32 pgs., available now
Writer: Brian Pulido
Artist: Wellington Alves
reviewed by **Brett Weiss** ★★★

In the late 1800s, a vicious, axe-wielding, supernaturally strong killer terrorized the small mining town of Hope, Ariz., killing 88 of its citizens. Black Jack Hatchet was eventually gunned down by a firing squad but rose to kill another day, thanks to a bogy mask-like talisman. The artifact ends up in the hands of a descendant of a woman named Wynona, whom the apparently ageless Jack took a liking to back in the day. Naturally, Jack mistakes this woman for her ancestor, and all hell breaks loose.

Avatar Press (along with IDW) is *the* home for horror these days, and *Bad Moon Rising* is a solid addition to its prolific stream of four-color scares. Fans of the genre will revel in the over-the-top violence and Black Jack's sheer meanness. The art handles the madness and mayhem well, and the women are real purdy, but it could use polish in terms of panel design and arrangement and storytelling.

The final page puts a key character in a seemingly inescapable situation, making the second issue must reading.

www.avatarpress.com

Wings of the Luftwaffe

Antarctic Press

$3.50, color, 32 pgs., available now
Writer and artist: Ted Nomura
reviewed by **Tim Lasiuta** ★★★

Sometimes, truth is stranger than fiction. In the closing days of World War II, Germany was developing long-distance aircraft and two-stage rockets in order to strike back at the United States on its own soil.

In two separate airfields separated by the ocean, two missions begin. The Luftwaffe takes off on a grand propoganda mission in two loaded JU-290s and a manned rocket. The American pilots pick up on approaching bogeys and take to flight. The Fireball squadron meets the Nazi pilots and an aerial battle ensues.

Ted Nomura writes compelling history. That is what *Wings* is. History. His take on the cultural nuances is notable, and, more importantly, his grasp of the military history of the time is admirable. Not only is his writing good but also his art is exemplary and his aircraft art splendid.

This is no *Our Army at War*. No anti-war crusade. This is an "airboy" comic, aimed at the pilot in all of us.

www.apmanga.com

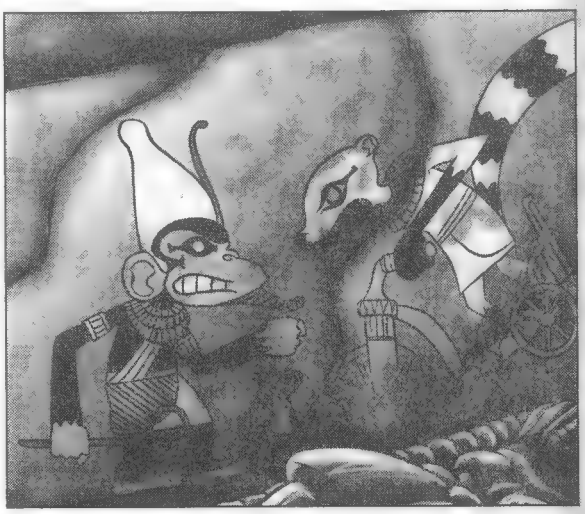
Monkey in a Wagon vs. Lemur on a Big Wheel: Crisis with Infinite Critters

Silent Devil

$3.95, b/w, 40 pgs., available now

Writers: Ken Lillie-Paetz, et al.; Artists: Chris Moreno, et al.

reviewed by **Timothy J. Wood** ★★★½



As my four-year-old said when I told him the title of this comic, "Wow." Exactly. It's got monkeys. It's got lemurs. It's got space babes. It's got parody, satire, wagons, and Big Wheels. What's not to like?

One could argue that the title story, an obvious riff on a recent "big event," is just too facile. A watcher waxes pathetic as a "fragment of time causes the universe to become, err, uh, fragmented." On Earth after Earth, absurd pairings of creatures on vehicles face each other, until — well, it kinda sinks in its own weighty silliness. Not unlike the self-important storylines elsewhere in the comics universe.

There are satires of *Grease*, *Star Wars*, and the comics' creators themselves. All are hilarious, especially "Moreno in a Wagon vs. Lillie-Paetz on a Big Wheel," in which the artist and writer morph into super-hero (and -villain) versions of their creations. Throughout, both the art and writing are sharp, especially Mark Dos Santos' retro *Star Wars* takeoff. But what's most enjoyable of all is the sheer bizarreness of the concept of a monkey in a wagon locked in a never-ending struggle with a lemur on a Big Wheel. It shouldn't work, but it does. Kinda sums up life, doesn't it?

www.silentdevil.com

Touch of Death #1

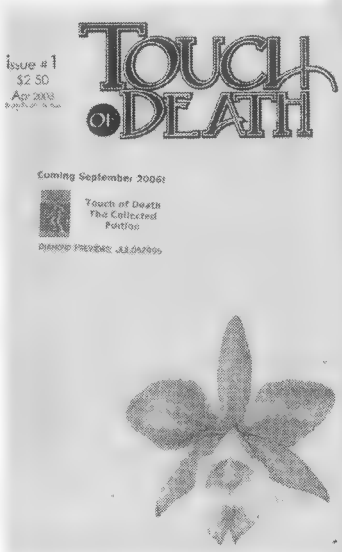
Brain Scan Studios

$2.50, b/w, 24 pgs., available now

Writer: Brian Kirsten

Artists: Ray Dillon, James Taylor

reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★★



Brian Kirsten weaves a strange tale about a woman who may exude some sort of poison through her skin, a trait she may have inherited from her ancestors. The comic appears to be steeped in Hawaiian lore or pseudo-lore. (The only Hawaiian god I know is Lono and that's because of the illustrated book by Hunter S. Thompson and Ralph Stedman.) When she gets angry, her skin becomes poisonous. It's not bad. There's some sort of subplot involving government agents trying to simultaneously track her down and destroy any evidence of her power.

The collected edition was released in September. I'm going to go out on a limb and say this is probably worth checking out. The only downside was that this issue didn't give me enough information to really clue me in on what's going on. I had to piece it together myself. But, I guess that's OK, since I think I pieced it together correctly. Ray Dillon and James Taylor's art is on track and the whole book had a nice Vertigo feel to it.

www.brainscanstudios.com

Shylock #2

Ronin Studios

$2.99, b/w, 32 pgs., available now

Writer: Shane Welker

Artist: Mike Williams

reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★★

Ronin Studios puts out some really nifty comics. This is one of the niftiest. *Shylock* features a crew of thugs that work out of a strip club. Hot girls, hotheaded paisans, and hitmen abound. Writer Shane Welker knows the crime lingo well. Artist Mike Williams and inker Tom Schloendorn did a great job on the art. It reminded me a little of some of the early Howard Chaykin stuff. This is the same sort of material: manly men using their fists and doin' what has to be done.

The boys gamble, drink, fight, and hit on strippers. Unfortunately, their good times may be coming to an end. When they go to avenge the beating of one of their buddies, things get out of hand, and Shylock, their boss, has to call in a hitman from out of town to clean up the mess.

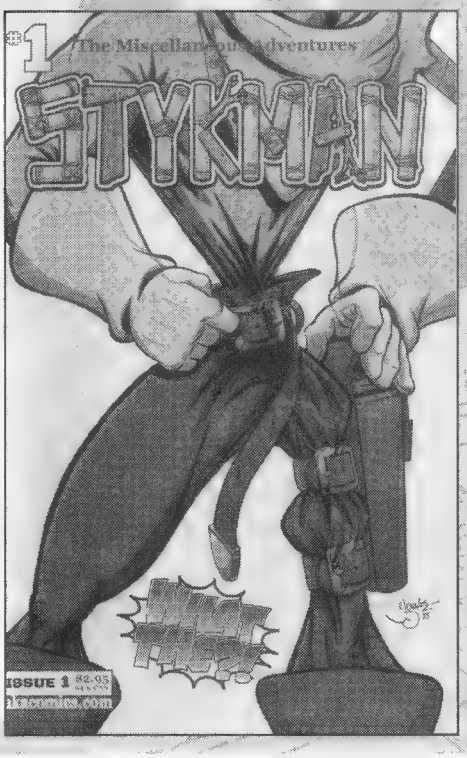
If you think the bad guys are more interesting than the good guys or if you're just looking for a little fodder for your *Complete Mafia* game, this comic is for you.

www.ronin-studios.com

The Miscellaneous Adventures of Stykman

akacomics.com

$2.95, color, 28 pgs., available now
Writer and artist: Jonnie Allan
reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★★½



Stykman is a bizarre little comedy, a super-hero comic book that works. Stykman is made of sticks and he fights crime. While everyone around him thinks he's an idiot, his narration says otherwise, but he somehow manages to save the day. His sidekick is an alien named Al who no doubt has some connection to his bizarre origin.

I thought the comic was pretty amusing. It wasn't quite as hilarious as *The Tick*, but it was pretty close. The villains included Handsome Dan (who isn't), Jolly Roger (a skull-faced pirate who isn't jolly), and a lawyer with a flaming head. If Jonnie Allan can keep piling on stranger and stranger villains, while simultaneously exploring Stykman's strange origins it could work. I am wary though, since he offered the first issue as a "Wizard World Philly Exclusive." What does that mean? He only sold it there? I wish new creators would stay away from those sorts of gimmicky labels.

I could've done without Allan's heavy-handed thank-yous to the troops, Jesus, and America, but for the most part, he keeps it out of the comic. If you're looking for a laugh, give it a try.

www.akacomics.com

Action Philosophers! #6

Evil Twin Comics

$2.95, b/w, 32 pgs., available now
Writer: Fred Van Lente
Artist: Ryan Dunlavey
reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★★

WHAAAAT?!
WHAT I WROTE WAS "WHAT CANNOT BE SAID MUST BE PASSED OVER IN SILENCE!"
BUT WHAT CANNOT BE SAID IS MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL!

The minds behind this series decided to let readers nominate and vote on the philosophers they'd most like to see in *Action Philosophers*. The winners? St. Thomas Aquinus, Soren Kierkegaard, and Ludwig Wittgenstein. (Several of the losing nominees are slated for appearance in future issues.)

So biography-*meister* Fred Van Lente works his abridging magic on these three philosophers, and with the usual results: an educational presentation rife with hilarity. The writing wouldn't be as hilarious without the art by Ryan Dunlavey, who makes each new facial expression something to laugh at (in a good way).

Granted, at times, Luddites like myself still don't catch all the references or understand completely the philosophy being explained (especially when there are formulas involved), but it is nonetheless enjoyable.

This book is philosophy for the thinking man who would rather not think too hard, a Philosophy 101. And bless Van Lente and Dunlavey for bringing it to the masses.

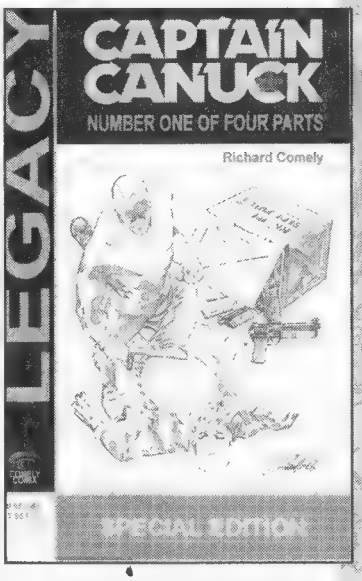
In case you've missed prior issues, the first (three-issue) volume is available, and the second (ditto) comes out in December.

www.actionphilosophers.com

Captain Canuck, Legacy #1

Comely Comix

$2.99, color, 32 pgs., available now
Writer and artist: Richard Comely
reviewed by **Tim Lasiuta** ★★★½



The good Captain is back. As a young Canadian comic-book fan, I was thrilled in 1975 when Captain Canuck first hit the shelves. Even better, the series was created by a fellow Albertan who lived less than an hour from me. I loved the series then, the bright red and white costume with sensibilities bordering on the later *Due South* and a little faith thrown in. It rocked.

Flash forward 30 years later. Richard Comely has re-issued and re-imagined Canuck as he tackles gunrunning across the Canadian border. This time, it's Darren Oak beneath the mask, not Tom Evans, and brother against brother as the battle turns ugly. Is this topical? You bet. Is *Legacy* a fitting title with Evans Sr. and Jr. colliding as brothers battle? Right again.

Comely does a splendid job of handling all the work on this. His script is tight, his art is fluid, and his pencils dynamic (as seen in the special edition).

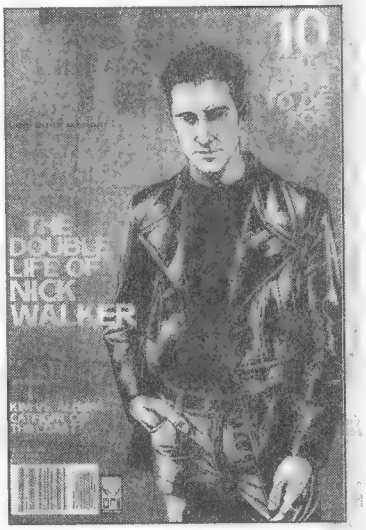
Fans of the old series will love this. New fans will love the Leonard Kirk art on the Special Edition. Look out. The Captain has returned.

www.captaincanuck.com

Leading Man #1

Oni Press

$3.50, color, 24 pgs., available now
Writer: B. Clay Moore
Artist: Jeremy Haun
reviewed by **Tim Lasiuta** ★★★



What do Hollywood and international security have in common?

Nick Walker.

Not only is he a well-known (#12 on the list) handsome actor, but he is also an international spy behind the scenes. On-set, his trailer boasts such unusual options as a fold-down plasma-screen satellite monitor, a satellite communications system, and a personal assistant (Travis) with fingers of steel insured by Lloyds of London and a sharp wit.

The first issue (of five) finds Nick filming his latest hit, sharing screen time with Kim Carlisle and Alison Grant off the coast of France, where he goes on a routine recon mission to a lighthouse.

B. Clay Moore has written a witty, compelling, flowing story that oozes charm and makes the reader want to keep turning pages. Jeremy Haun's art is smooth, as well, complementing Moore's storytelling skills. Clean, simple, and suitably rendered, Haun's art displays competence in his craft.

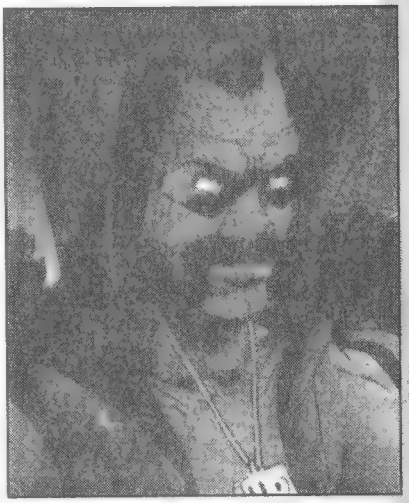
Walker is his own man. Danger is his mistress — next to the lights of Hollywood, that is.

www.onipress.com

Return of the Super Pimps

Dial "C" for Comics

$2, color, 24 pgs., available now
Writer: Richard Hamilton
Artist: Ulises Roman
reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★½



After reading the title, a natural reaction could easily be "woof." But I'm here to tell you, brothers and sisters, this book is a sweet piece of reading, if you take the time to get it.

This first installment — titled "Enter the Super Pimps!" — introduces the reader to — what else? — The Hood, 30 years ago. Then and in the present, the Super Pimps were and are becoming again a force to be reckoned with. (How could they not, with a Pimpmobile with license place "BTCHSLAP"?)

The satire is thick, the humor is at times laugh-out-loud, at times less so, but the pace and writing keep this comic flowing.

The art, very dark, moody, and with a focus on *noir* style, balances the satire with the super-heroic drama.

To those who enjoy the '70s films this comic emulates: This book will make you smile. To those who dislike such things: Best avoid this, though it is a groovy ride on the (satirically) wild side.

www.dialcforcomics.com

Donnie Bling Bling Techno Pimp/ Revolutionary Warfare

A.G.E. Studios

$2.50, b/w, 32 pgs., available now
Writers and artists: Various
reviewed by **Tony DiGerolamo** ★★

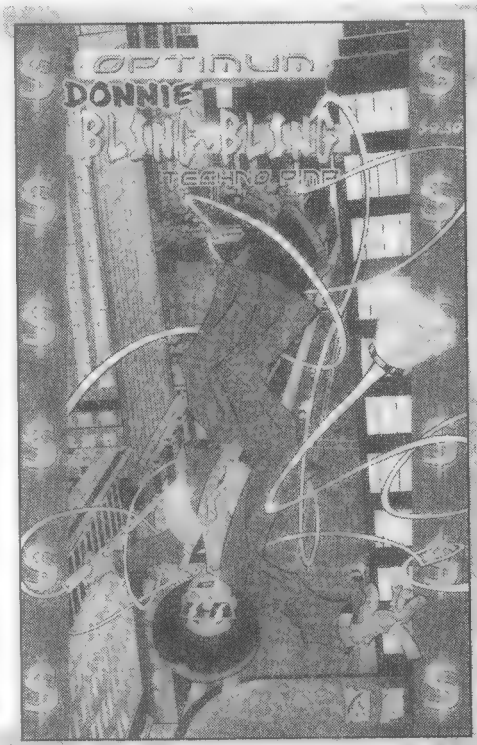
This is a flipbook, but it's mostly *Donnie Bling-Bling* stories. Donnie is a super-powered pimp that battles such rivals as The Cyber-Pimp and The Flying Squirrel. I found the title of this comic book more amusing than the actual comic.

It's pretty much a by-the-book super-hero story, but with a pimp. I did not, however, see any ho's. The story and art by Xian is confusing at times, but it did have some funny bits. If you're going to use a pimp as your main character, you might as well take advantage of the adult subject matter, but this comic doesn't.

There was a drawing of Donnie done by a 6-year-old fan on the inside cover. I'm not sure if it was a joke or not.

Revolutionary Warfare started very political but quickly became a sort of brief *Tales from the Crypt*. I think both creations have potential. Maybe they should be marketed separately since they appeal to two distinct audiences. *Revolutionary Warfare* alone attempts to touch on the Iraq war, people struggling with cancer, crime, and marriage. It's an ambitious agenda that probably could've used more pages.

www.alphagodz.com



The O'Brien Factor: Fair and Balanced Reviews

Comics are everywhere if you take a moment to stop and look for them. That's the lesson I learned after attending Atlantique City, the world's largest antiques and collectibles show, Oct. 12-15, in Atlantic City, N.J. Among the jewelry, Revolutionary War-era furniture, pottery, Depression glass, antique toys, and interesting old stuff, a few dealers included small stacks of comic books.

Compared to the carnival-like atmosphere of Comic-Con International: San Diego, Atlantique City is more like a museum. A few vendors were even playing classical music in their booths and I was intrigued to discover a Victrola spinning cylinders made in the 1920s. Discovering the dealers with Baby Boomer-era toys and comic books made me feel a little more at home.

Rounding one corner filled with antique soda pop signs, I caught a glimpse of Alex Ross art and was pleased to discover a familiar booth, Choice Collectibles, a regular dealer at Comic-Con. Although Ross' *Mythology* portraits initially caught my attention, consultant Jason Romano was happy to discus the company's forte — original animation cels. The walls were lined with cels from Disney, Hanna-Barbera, Warner Bros., and the Peanuts gang. Each cel was drawn, inked, and painted by hand, and each certainly deserves its place among works of art. Or antiques.

Enough about my travels, on to the comics!

***Students of the Unusual Giant-Sized Extra Credit Special* #1**
3 Boys Productions
$2.95, color, 50 pgs., available now
Various artists and writers

It isn't every day that comics are packaged with DVDs, but who knows what the future holds. This comic is comprised of six unusual stories from different writing and art teams. It's for mature audiences, so keep that in mind. "King of the Road" is a tale of homeless philosopher Uncle Pat and the three young heroes as they prepare to face an imminent and unknown danger. Meanwhile, Uncle Pat must help another homeless man through his surgery to remove a sentient cancer.

"These Days" finds the angel Elvis on a mission to take care of business, and cleverly uses lyrics from Elvis songs as dialogue. "Fountain of Youth" is my favorite in the book. It retells the story of Ponce de Leon's search for the Fountain of Youth from the perspective of three homeless guys living under a bridge and lets us know just where the Fountain is today.

"The Destruction of the Star/The Return/The Thinker" contains the book's most beautiful art and perhaps its most difficult story to follow. "Strangler" turns the tables on a serial killer stalking the city, and "Ghostcar" is a light-hearted look at a car that's possessed, or is it?

If *Tales of the Unexpected* is your cup of tea, you'll enjoy *Students of the Unusual*.

The DVD contains a number of short films based on stories from the series.

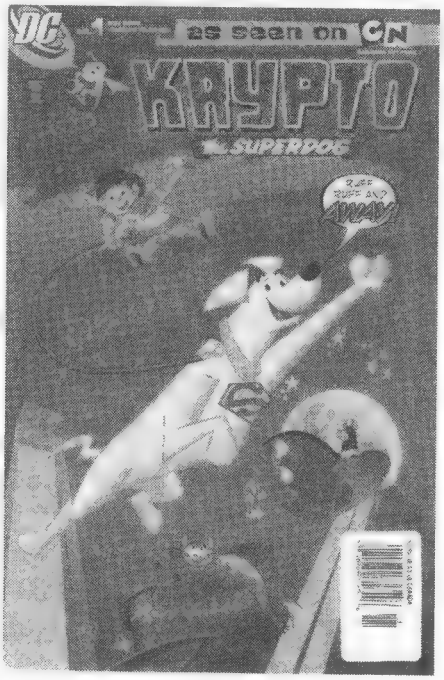
www.studentsoftheunusual.com

***Krypto the Superdog* #1**
DC
$2.25, color, 32 pgs., available now
Writer: Jesse Leon McCann
Artists: Min S. Ku, Jeff Albrecht

Adult collectors often ignore kid-friendly comics, but there are some gems on the shelves like *Justice League Unlimited* and the new *Krypto the Superdog* that might surprise those "too cool for kid-friendly." Based on the Cartoon Network series, *Krypto* follows the show format by including several stories within the comic book. We learn how Krypto came to Earth in eight succinct panels, how he met his human friend Kevin, and how he was reunited with Superman, all in the first story, "Here Comes Krypto."

Because Superman is so busy, Kevin agrees to let Krypto live at his house, and the adventures begin.

I enjoy comics that possess a complimentary blend of good story and good art as I turn the pages. Krypto is an artistic homerun by that standard. It is a comic intended for a young audience, so Min S. Ku's pencils and Jeff Albrecht's inks focus on simple, bold



lines that make Krypto and his companions instantly endearing. Finding Jim Lee's incredibly detailed anatomy or Alex Ross' deep facial expressions here would be a shock to the system and probably not what the story needs.

Jesse Leon McCann's stories include an interesting cast of characters. The Joker makes a delightful cameo appearance in "The Dark Hound Returns," and I can almost hear Mark Hamill's voice as The Joker speaks. Streaky the Supercat and Ace the Bathound join Krypto in foiling The Joker's plot.

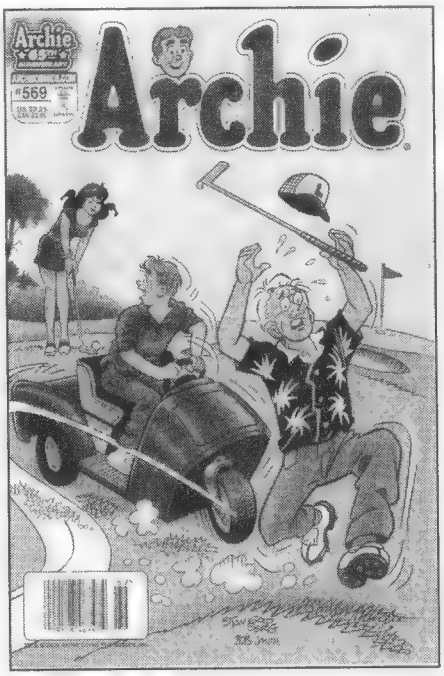
This is the good stuff, folks.

www.dccomics.com

Archie #569
Archic Comic Publications, Inc.
$2.25, color, 32 pgs., available now
Writers: Angelo DeCesare, Craig Boldman, Mike Pellowski, George Gladir
Artists: Stan Goldberg, Bob Smith

I couldn't let Archie's 65th anniversary go by without comment, so I picked up #569 and enjoyed a good chuckle. So many adult comics fans grew up with Archie and his friends that we all should remember that the world's oldest teenager still has lessons to learn and teach in the new century.

Multiple stories are included and the first, "How to Survive High School," is Archie's clumsy attempt to play the role of survival expert and show us how to sneak into school after the bell rings, avoid the principal, stealthily open an overstuffed locker, and sneak into class without being detected. Of course, everything goes wrong, Archie hasn't fooled anyone, and he's forced to show his parents failing grades at the end.



"Come Blow Your Horn" guest-stars Jughead and Veronica in the search for an instrument that will set their rock band apart from the crowd. Mr. Lodge's alphorn is selected and after destroying most of the household with it and attracting a flock of sheep, the kids give up. In "Clean Up Your Act," grocery store stockboy Archie gets his fill of cleaning up the aisles after careless store patrons.

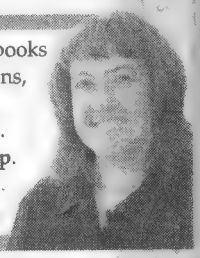
Still socially and politically relevant, Archie's last adventure in the issue, "Feeling Fuelish," finds Archie dreaming of a world without gasoline. The impact is felt in everything from the horse-drawn carriage that becomes the school bus to the freeways clogged with skateboard commuters.

When he wakes Archie says, "Thank goodness we still *do* have gas! And it might *last* for a while with a little conservation."

Nice job, Archie.

www.archiecomics.com

KAREN O'BRIEN is a books editor for Krause Publications, a division of **CBG** parent company F+W Publications. She also writes for **Toy Shop**. Contact Karen at **karen.obrien@fwpubs.com**



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Interested in joining The Review Crew? E-mail *pitchcbg@krause.com*!

BOUND For Glory

TRADE PAPERBACK AND GRAPHIC NOVEL REVIEWS

I WASN'T ON THE THRONE LONG BEFORE OZMA, THE RIGHTFUL RULER OF OZ WAS DISCOVERED. SHE HAD BEEN KIDNAPPED BY A WITCH--BUT NOW SHE RULES THE ENTIRE LAND OF OZ.

PICK OF THE MONTH TPB

Adventures in Oz

IDW Publishing

$39.99, color, 272 pgs., available now

Writer and artist: Eric Shanower

reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★★

It's about time someone reprinted Eric Shanower's *Oz* graphic novels from the late 1980s and early 1990s. Shanower and IDW even go one step further, correcting some production mistakes from the stories' original printings. The book reprints *The Enchanted Apples of Oz*, *The Secret Island of Oz*, *The Ice King of Oz*, *The Forgotten Forest of Oz*, and *The Blue Witch of Oz*.

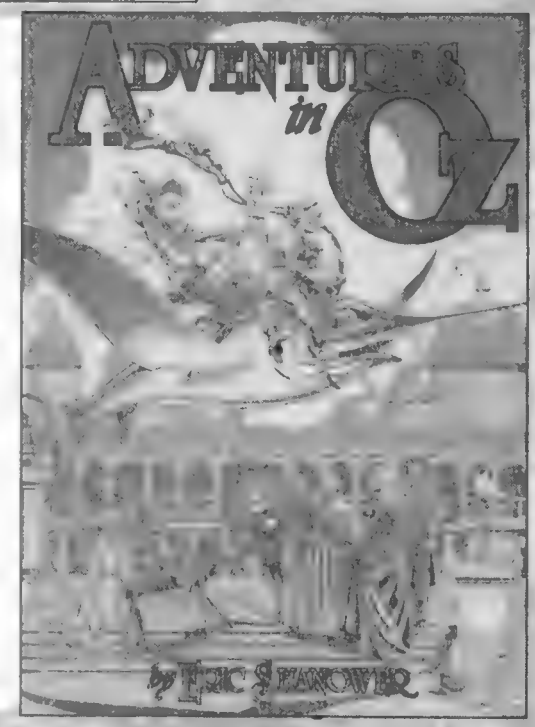
Shanower stays true to the characters created by L. Frank Baum, capturing their essence and the spirit of the books wonderfully. If anyone is qualified to take these characters to the next step, it's Shanower. He has a rich knowledge of *Oz* lore and it shows on every page.

All the stories are good, but *The Forgotten Forest of Oz* is the best as Shanower gives Oz a sword-and-sorcery feel with Dorothy and The Scarecrow caught in the middle of a war between nymphs and dragons. Shanower really outdid himself with this one.

A signed copy of this collection is also available featuring Shanower's commentary, obscure comics, and character sketches. If you're looking for new stories featuring classic characters, it doesn't get any better than this!

www.idwpublishing.com

ISBN: 1-93323-961-1



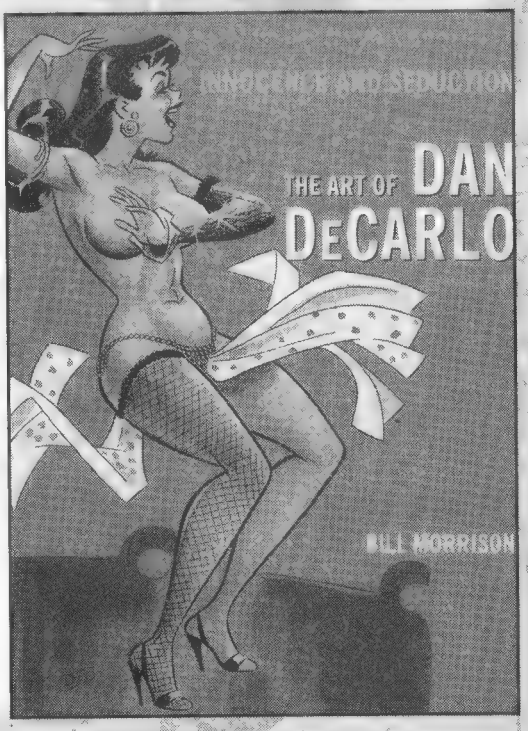
Innocence and Seduction: The Art of Dan DeCarlo

Fantagraphics

$34.95, color, 208 pgs., available now

Writer: Bill Morrison; Artist: Dan DeCarlo

reviewed by **Jack Abramowitz** ★★★½



Seduction? Who are we kidding? Even Dan DeCarlo's "bad girls" are wholesome girls next door.

Let's get it out of the way: Betty and Veronica, Josie, and Sabrina are here, but they're hardly the focus. Betty and Veronica don't really appear until page 90, and the Archie chapter isn't until page 141. So what occupies most of the book? DeCarlo's other girls steal the spotlight: Irma, Pearl, Sherry, Millie, Nelly, and other beauties. There are some non-"Good Girl" pieces, as well: Big Boy, Homer the Happy Ghost, and Willie Lumpkin among them. (What? You didn't know that Willie the mailman had his own newspaper strip before becoming The FF's designated carrier?)

"Seduction" must refer to the chapter entitled "Fifty Girls in Forty-Nine Costumes." Perhaps these showgirls and figure models were once risqué, but now they're downright quaint.

Perhaps most intriguing are the pieces Dan drew for his wife, Josie, when they were courting in France during World War II.

Anyone who has admired DeCarlo's Archie work owes it to himself (or herself) to discover the breadth of his portfolio.

www.fantagraphics.com

ISBN 1-56097-710-8

The Illustrated Dracula

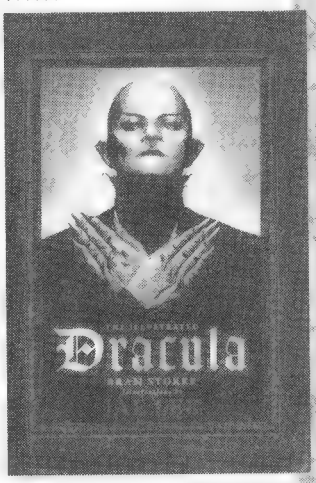
Viking Studio

$21.95, b/w, 390 pgs., available now

Writer: Bram Stoker

Artist: Jae Lee

reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★★



Do you like Bram Stoker's *Dracula*? Do you like Jae Lee? If the answer to both is "yes," then perhaps spending the $22 to get this book would be a logical notion.

For scholars seeking annotations or critical analyses, seek ye not here. This is the regular, ol' text with an illustration every 15-20 pages.

That said, Lee's art is wonderful, and, even without seeing it, those who know his work know he's a superb choice for this project. You can practically hear his pencils whispering, "*nosferatu ad infinitum.*"

The tale remains the same, which is a good thing. The publisher didn't abridge or otherwise alter the classic text, complete with the well-known dedication, "To my dear friend Hommy-Beg."

This is the first in a series of classic novels being illustrated by contemporary artists, along with Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* with art by Dame Darcy. Lee's complementing of *Dracula* should please fans of the original work as well as his own fans. However, anyone expecting a comic-book treatment of the classic book should stay away — this is nothing of the sort.

www.penguin.com

ISBN: 0-14-200515-0

Stagger Lee

Image

$17.99, b/w, 205 pgs., available now

Writer: Derek McCulloch

Artist: Shepherd Hendrix

reviewed by **Tim Lasiuta** ★★★½

The songs are well known. Jazz, rock, and R & B legends have all sung songs based on Lee Shelton, aka Stagger Lee, since the early 1900s. Performers have included The Clash, Mississippi John Hurt, Bob Dylan, and The Grateful Dead.

Lee Shelton kills Billy Lyon over a Stetson hat. Shelton either hangs or goes to jail. Derek McCulloch and Shepherd Hendrix have created a contemporary cultural classic that has the impact of Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Not only is this a graphic novel, but also an examination of "They said," "they saw," and "they meant" from both black and white viewpoints. This is no comic-book fluff.

Filled with complex characters motivated by various concerns, this story of Stagger Lee sits at the cusp of American history. Racial attitudes and the beginnings of the rise of black power are represented well.

Shepherd Hendrix' style captures the narrative rich storyline. The choice of sepia tones over color is fitting. Prepare for an unusual history lesson.

www.imagecomics.com

ISBN: 1-58240-607-3

Wonder Woman: Destiny Calling

DC

$19.99, color, 175 pgs., available now
Writer: George Pérez
Artists: Pérez, Art Adams, *et al.*
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★

George Pérez proves he's a decent writer with the first story of the fourth volume collecting his *Wonder Woman* relaunch in the late 1980s. "Who Killed Myndi Mayer?" is a murder mystery that has a *pulp noir* feel. Diana helps the Boston police investigate the murder of her publicist, Myndi Mayer, who made Alexis Carrington seem sweet and lovable by comparison. In the end, Diana solves the murder and even gets a glimpse of Myndi's softer side.

Pérez then switches gears, taking Diana back to her mythological roots, as Zeus and the rest of the Greek Gods plan to leave the Earthly plane. Hermes stays behind and tries to bribe people with money in order to worship him again. He runs afoul of Phobos and Ixion the Assassin, forcing Diana to clean up after him. Pérez also fleshes out the characters of Diana's Amazon sisters, making them more three-dimensional.

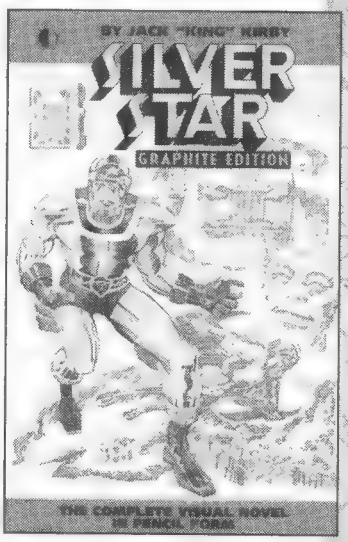
All in all, this is good reading. Pérez made the character great again by going back to the basics — the same way Walter Simonson did with Marvel's *Thor* in the mid-'80s. It's too bad that, back then, those two didn't collaborate on a *Wonder Woman-Thor* crossover.

www.dccomics.com
ISBN: 1-40120-943-2

Silver Star

TwoMorrows

$19.95, b/w, 160 pgs., available now
Writer and artist: Jack Kirby
reviewed by **Oliver Chin** ★★½



Cracking under the pressure of battle in the Vietnam War, U.S. soldier Morgan Miller transforms into a one-man wrecking crew, powered by the cosmic storm in his genes. Earning a Silver Star in the process, he is similarly named by Dr. Hammer who encases his radiating atomic body in a metal suit.

But our hero is not the only specimen of *Homo geneticus* and must confront his nemesis Darius Drumm, a bloodthirsty misanthrope who seeks revenge upon Morgan's mad-scientist father and humanity itself. Do Silver Star and his gal, Norma Desmond, have the power to combat the Angel of Death and avert Doomsday?

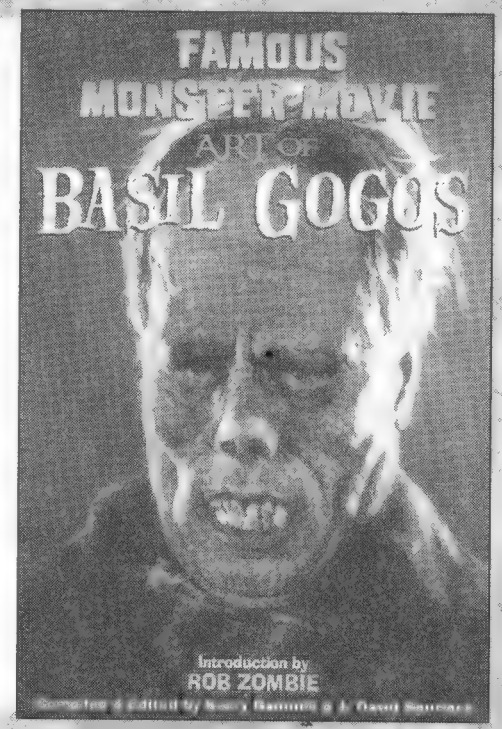
Kirby adapted his '70s screenplay, which Pacific Comics published a decade later as a six-issue series, and this collection reprints Kirby's final comic in his original pencils with a few inked pages. Though Kirby's style had fallen out of favor at the time, it still pulses with his hallmark energy. However, the story itself isn't a classic, since it features a wooden Captain American clone surrounded by melodramatic dialogue.

www.twomorrows.com
ISBN: 1-89390-555-1

Famous Monster Movie Art of Basil Gogos

Vanguard Productions

$39.95 hardcover, $24.95 paperback, color and b/w, 160 pgs., available now
Writers: Kerry Gammill, J. David Spurlock; Artist: Basil Gogos
reviewed by **Maggie Thompson** ★★★½



This stunning book, first released in February, is now available again, thanks to a second printing. Artist Basil Gogos built his fan base primarily via the cover art he provided for the Forrest J Ackerman monster magazine published by Jim Warren, *Famous Monsters of Filmland*. Nevertheless, despite the title of this volume, neither his art nor this book is limited to reproductions of Gogos' monster work.

His dynamic paintings and illustrations illuminated several genres in popular culture. Among the many aspects of Gogos' art is that, in many cases, the painter added color to what had been previously known primarily as black-and-white images. Providing perspective, the book quotes extensively from Gogos' own comments: "There's a fine line between illustration and fine art.

One difference is that, in illustration, you enhance the picture. You punch it up, you make it more dynamic." And indeed he did — and does.

Text and art enhance each other in this excellently produced book that is further illuminated by the creator's remarks as well as tributes from those he has influenced.

www.creativemix.com/basilgogos/
ISBN 1-887591-72-9

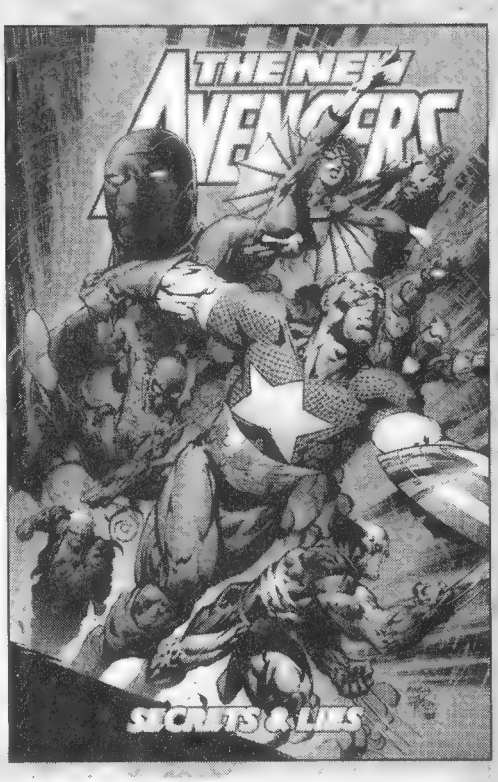
The New Avengers: Secrets & Lies

Marvel

$14.99, color, 128 pgs., available now

Writer: Brian Michael Bendis; Artists: David Finch, Frank Cho

reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★



In this collection, The Avengers take on Hydra and The Hand. During a battle with the ninjas, one manages to wound Iron Man with a non-magical sword. Huh? This armor has withstood blows from The Hulk and, all of the sudden, a nameless ninja hurts him? That makes no sense.

This sequence also includes The Avengers going public with their new team. There's a cool scene where J. Jonah Jameson agrees to lay off his attacks on Spider-Man in exchange for exclusive coverage of The Avengers. Of course, he then bashes the new team. Typical JJJ.

There are some continuity flaws, including Jameson showing no reaction to Ms. Marvel (who went public with her ID), regardless of the fact that she worked for him once. Earlier, when Cap confronted Spider-Woman, he appeared in costume, then in civvies.

The dialogue is laugh out loud funny and carries the book — that is writer Brian Michael Bendis' gift. David Finch and Frank Cho do a spectacular job on the art. I'd like to see more of a traditional Avengers team with Thor, Vision, Hawkeye, Scarlet Witch, and so on, interacting with such new members as Spider-Man.

www.marvel.com

ISBN: 0-78078-511-706-3

The Complete Peanuts 1959-1960

Fantagraphics

$28.95, b/w, 344 pgs., available now

Writer and artist: Charles Schulz

reviewed by **Oliver Chin** ★★★½

As a testament to *Peanuts*' place in Americana, newspaper editors are still afraid to cancel the strip, years after the creator's death. Although the latest generation of readers may only know the bland autopilot output that's currently recycled in many papers, Schulz deserved his reputation as a comics innovator, as evinced by this latest collection of 700+ dailies.

Introducing Charlie Brown's younger sister Sally (mirroring the sibling rivalry of Lucy and Linus Van Pelt), Schulz continued to refine the eccentric interplay among his starting lineup. The manager of the Baddest News Bears, the blockhead is treated at Lucy's "doctor's office," Linus awaits the arrival of Halloween's Great Pumpkin, and Snoopy assumes his iconic perch on his doghouse and charismatically becomes The Mad Punter, Big Man on Campus, and Linus' blanket nemesis.

In his first decade, Schulz lay groundwork that proved strong enough conceptually to last another 40 years. In hindsight, coining "Happiness is a warm puppy" was licensing genius, but here it seems purely the result of an artist's creative roll of a lifetime.

www.fantagraphics.com

ISBN: 1-56097-671-3

Modesty Blaise: The Gallows Bird

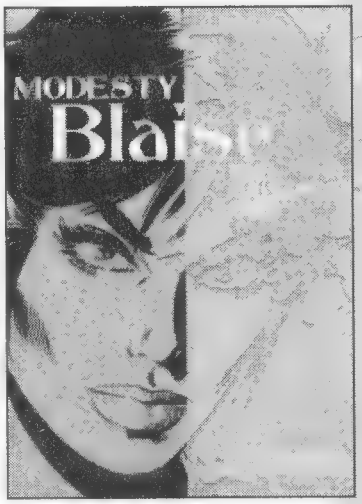
Titan Books

$17.95, b/w, 128 pgs., available now

Writer: Peter O'Donnell

Artist: Enric Badia Romero

reviewed by **Tim Lasiuta** ★★★



Modesty Blaise is a spy with the physical and mental attributes that empower her to tackle the most dangerous foes. The creation of writer Peter O'Donnell, Modesty Blaise appeared in British newspapers from 1963 to 2001, written by O'Donnell and originally drawn by Jim Holdaway. After his death, Ernri Badia Romero drew most of the run. *The Gallows Bird* features "The Bluebird Affair," "The Gallows Bird," "The Wicked Gnomes," and "The Iron God," four excellent storylines that will hook new readers on *Blaise*.

Romero is a master of photo-realistic art; readers may almost catch themselves looking *too* close!

Quentin Tarantino has been inspired by this beautiful super-spy and former crime boss, and you will be, too. The supporting cast of Willie Garvin, Sir Gerald Tarrant, and a delightful company of strangers, villains, and thieves enrich the world of Modesty Blaise.

Here's hoping they find cleaner art throughout for the next book!

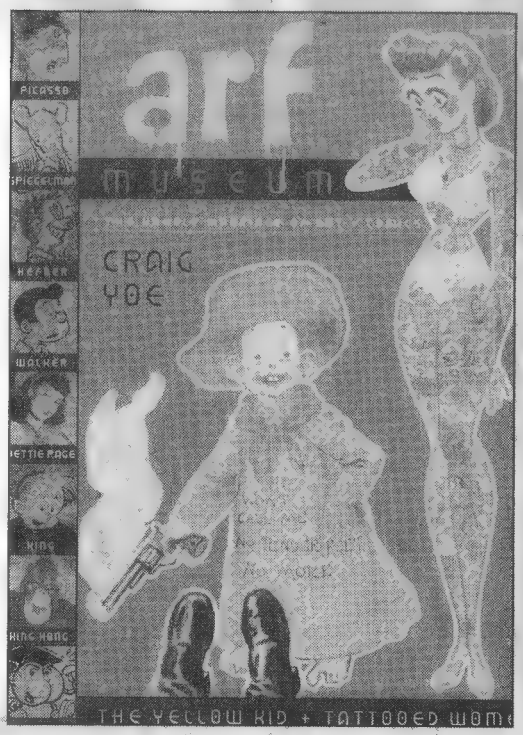
www.titanbooks.com

ISBN: 1-84023-868-2

Arf Museum

Fantagraphics

$19.95, color and b/w, 120 pgs., available now
Writer: Craig Yoe; Artists: Various
reviewed by **George Hagenauer** ★★★½



With a dozen R.F. Outcault *Yellow Kid* paintings (shot from the original art), a section on early 20th century radical cartoonist Art Young, and a portfolio of good gorilla art (ranging from the 1890s to Curt Swan's *Jimmy Olsen*), it would be hard to find a book that better matches my personal tastes than the second *Arf* outing (the first being *Modern Arf*) by Craig Yoe.

On top of it, there is the surprise find, Charles Bennett, an artist from the 1850s I have never before encountered in my 50 years of reading comics. Bennett's work is fascinating, insofar as he does single-panel cartoons with transformations occurring via a circular progression within the overall illustration. It's an approach that I have never seen before and that defies categorization.

For folks interested in more mainstream comic books, there are two pre-Code Atlas horror stories as well as several single pages including an odd Sheldon Moldoff DC public service ad referencing Picasso.

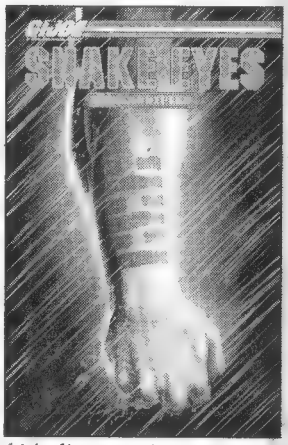
If you love all sorts of comics and enjoy being surprised (by such items as Chester Gould doing Pablo Picasso), join the Arf community. It is a visual *tour de force* that inevitably adds a new artist or series to my want list every time I get one.

www.fantagraphics.com

Snake Eyes: Declassified HC

Devil's Due

$29.95, color, 160 pgs., available now
Writer: Brandon Jerwa
Artists: Emiliano Santalucia, Robert Atkins
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★½



Brandon Jerwa takes the tidbits that Snake Eyes creator Larry Hama revealed about the origin of the enigmatic ninja of the G.I.Joe team and builds on them. He treats everything Hama did with respect, yet tells his own story, while making some modifications. In the original Marvel story, Hama revealed that Snake Eyes was in the Vietnam War with Storm Shadow and Stalker. Here, Jerwa states he was in some unnamed conflict in Southeast Asia with those two.

Snake Eyes' face is revealed and it's disconcerting to see a mute character spouting paragraph upon paragraph of dialogue. Readers also get to see Cobra Commander's face.

It also shows the mission where Snake Eyes' face was hideously disfigured (too bad the creative team doesn't show what it looks like at that point), filling in the blanks Hama set up way back when. Appearances by Scarlett, Dr. Mindbender, Dr. Venom, and The Crimson Twins round out the book.

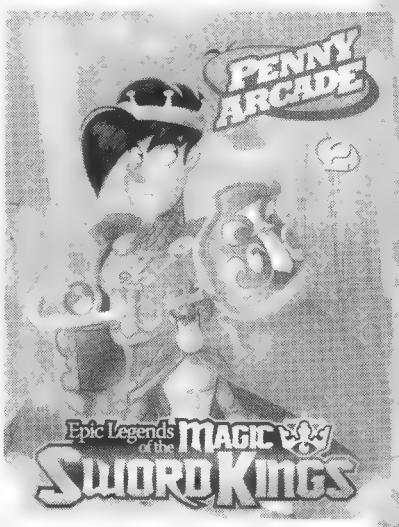
Not only does Hama write the introduction, but also a short-story serving as the prelude to Marvel's *G.I. Joe* #21, the classic silent issue. Jerwa does such a great job with this character and it shows, putting him on par with Hama as a quintessential *G.I. Joe* scribe. Excellent reading.

www.devilsdue.net
ISBN: 1-93279-672-X

Penny Arcade Vol. 2

Dark Horse

$12.95, color, 160 pgs., available now
Writers and artists: Jerry Holkins, Mike Krahulik
reviewed by **Tim Lasiuta** ★★★



OK, this is my first exposure to *Penny Arcade*, and I like it. I mean: a print collection of an online strip about videogame nerds who hang on every PR announcement and platform change — with humor!

The adventures of Gabriel and Tycho (along with the daily comments) make this a volume the reader must enjoy page by page. With a child who loves his PS2 and Gameboy, many of the comics relate directly to the computer world, too. Like the *big* comic from page 71 titled "Windows Wrestling Federation." Who hasn't had a glitch in XP or ME that has wiped out files or crashed with no apparent reason? I can even relate to the Magic 8 Ball, though I don't think my brothers had "I slept with your wife" as an answer.

As a "teaser" warning: The cover has nothing to do with the content. If you are a fan of the strip, you probably know that already. If you don't, you will like the art section and a short selection of unpublished stories by the demented duo.

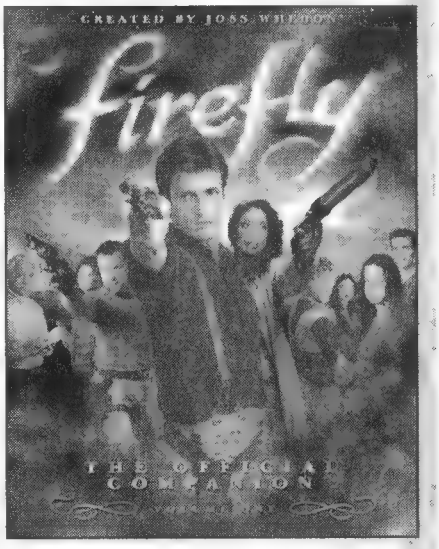
Prepare for a twisted ride.

www.darkhorse.com
ISBN: 1-59307-541-3

Firefly: The Official Companion Vol. 1

Titan Books

$19.95, color, 176 pgs., available now
Writers: Abbie Bernstein, Tara DiLullo, Brian Cairns, Karl Derrick
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★★



This is the official companion to the 2002 cult TV series and later spawned the 2005 movie. It features everything you need to know about Joss Whedon's space opera and more, including unseen photos, concept sketches, interviews with the cast and crew (including Whedon), as well as the scripts for half the episodes.

The scripts are an excellent tool for those who aspire to be a screenwriter, offering readers a glimpse into the creative genius that is Whedon and his now-defunct Mutant Enemy gang of writers including Tim Minear, Jane Espenson, and Drew Greenberg, all of whom made outstanding contributions to Whedon's *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Angel* mythos.

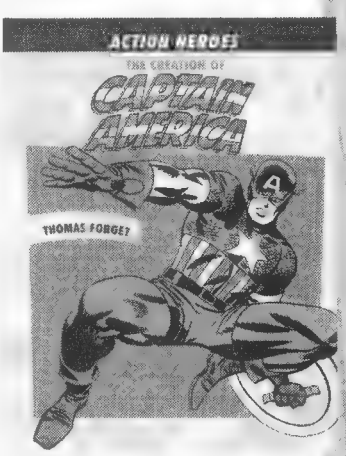
The good news? This is just the first volume. The second volume should be out sometime in 2007.

www.titanbooks.com
ISBN: 1-84576-314-9

The Creation of Captain America

Rosen Publishing

$21.95, color, 48 pgs., available now
Writer: Thomas Forget
Artists: Jack Kirby, John Byrne, Don Heck, *et al.*
reviewed by **Tim Lasiuta** ★★½



Captain America has always been one of my favorite characters. Perhaps it's the funky costume, his larger-than-life missions and adventures, or his supporting cast of Bucky, Sharon, Nick Fury, The Falcon, and The Red Skull.

With its Action Heroes line of books, Rosen has tackled the creation of Marvel's most popular characters. Thomas Forget has written an interesting history of Steve Rogers and his life from 1941 to the present.

Forget covers the history of Timely and Marvel, the life of Jacob Kurtzberg (Jack Kirby) and Joe Simon as freelancers and staff members, and an overview of the six decades of Cap's comic-book life. The Nazi-bashing hero, the Cold War soldier, the "born into the wrong decade" Avenger, the disenchanted 1970s and the Jack Kirby era, and the present incarnation of Cap are discussed. Forget weaves the themes and major storylines into his discussion and manages to tip his hat to the major writers and artists of the decades.

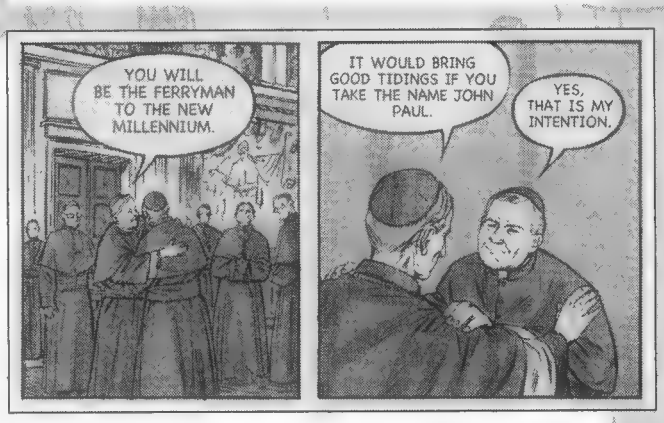
Is this a "must-have"? I love the rare photos and it's good but falls short due to length. But we can always buy the comics, right?

www.rosenpublishing.com
ISBN: 1-402-0766-x

The Life of Pope John Paul II ... in Comics!

NBM/Papercutz

$16.95, color, 98 pgs., available now
Writer: Alessandro Mainardi; Artist: Werner Maresta
reviewed by **Brent Frankenhoff** ★★★


YOU WILL BE THE FERRYMAN TO THE NEW MILLENNIUM.
IT WOULD BRING GOOD TIDINGS IF YOU TAKE THE NAME JOHN PAUL.
YES, THAT IS MY INTENTION.

Designed to appeal to Catholics and non-Catholics alike, *The Life of Pope John Paul II* is a wonderful tribute to the religious leader.

Translated from its original Italian publication, the book focuses on John Paul's ascent to the papacy, with flashbacks to his early life in Poland, the narrow escapes where it seemed a higher power was watching over him, and the devastating losses that only served to make him stronger.

John Paul's work in maintaining religious observances under the Nazis and, later, the Communists is dealt with frankly and shows how clever he was, while also illustrating that he, like any other person, had doubts and concerns.

The political maneuverings of the College of Cardinals when electing a new Pope are also shown, but far too briefly.

And that's the major complaint with this biography. It's good for what it is, but it's too brief in some areas, while lingering on other periods of John Paul's life too long.

This really shows near the book's end, where, once again, a page count dictated a fast-paced conclusion. Rather than a dry text list of Pope John Paul II's accomplishments during his papacy, illustrate them. There are numerous stories about his trips around the world and the vast audiences that met him at every stop. Certainly there were additional opportunities for illustration.

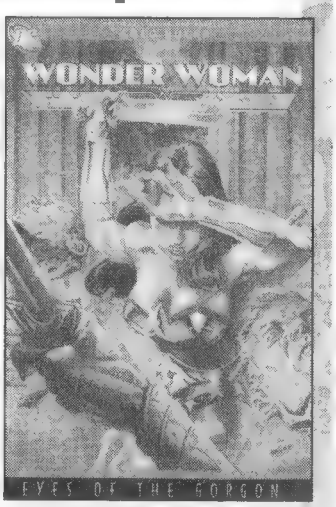
And, while it may have been tough to explain, the changes in the church from Vatican II should also have been covered somewhere in the story.

www.papercutz.com
ISBN: 1-59707-039-4

Wonder Woman: Eyes of the Gorgon

DC

$19.99, color, 192 pgs., available now
Writer: Greg Rucka
Artists: Various
reviewed by **George Nelson** ★★★½



Super-heroine. Warrior. Daughter of myth. Wonder Woman has been portrayed as all these and more over the past 65 years, but few creators have melded these various aspects as capably as writer Greg Rucka has during his run, as reflected in this trade paperback. In the course of the arc collected here, Diana seamlessly moves from following up on the new Silver Swan's creation and coping with the menace of Doctor Psycho to battling the vengeful Medusa. All this plays against a backdrop of mounting political intrigue that builds to an outright coup on Olympus, climaxing with the clash between the Amazons and Zeus' monstrous protector.

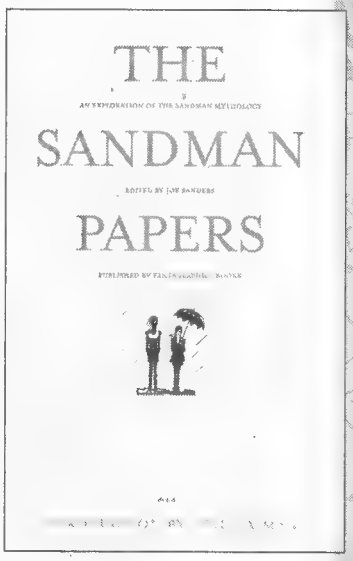
Rarely have *Wonder Woman* writers embraced the character's warrior roots and mythological background to the degree Rucka has. Or as effectively, as well illustrated in this collection, showcasing the lengths she will go to in order to protect innocents: not only her sometimes brutal efficiency in combat, but the personal sacrifice. Rucka also grounds this tale with a price — one of the most horrible imaginable — paid by one of the supporting cast in this tale of the gods, who are often portrayed as capricious and petty.

www.dccomics.com
ISBN: 1-40120-797-9

The Sandman Papers

Fantagraphics

$18.95, b/w, 224 pgs., available now
Editor: Joe Sanders
reviewed by **Tim Lasiuta** ★★★½



Not only has Neil Gaiman created a character that has changed comic books, but also a character that has become a topic of intellectual conversation and debate.

His Sandman has starred in a serious literary work disguised as a comic book. Gaiman has drawn on grand themes from lesbianism to Orientalism, from imaginary places to female power, and beyond. Fully appreciating *The Sandman* requires long-lost skills, critical thought, and a full range of historical and literary reference.

The book is broken into two sections: "Episodes and Themes" and "Larger Contexts." The essays are illustrated by Charles Vess, D'Israeli, Dave McKean, and John Totleben. The most interesting essays are "Prospero Framed in Neil Gaiman's *The Wake*," "Imaginary Places and Fantastic Narratives: Reading Borges Through *The Sandman*," and "Reinventing the Spiel: Old Stories, New Approaches."

Intelligent. Thoughtful. Meaningful. Comics are not just for kids.

www.fantagraphics.com
ISBN: 1-56097-748-5

Grimm Fairy Tales Vol. 1

Zenescope Entertainment

$15.99, color, 170 pgs., available now
Writers: Joe Tyler, Ralph Tedesco; Artists: Joe Dodd, Justin Holman
reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★★

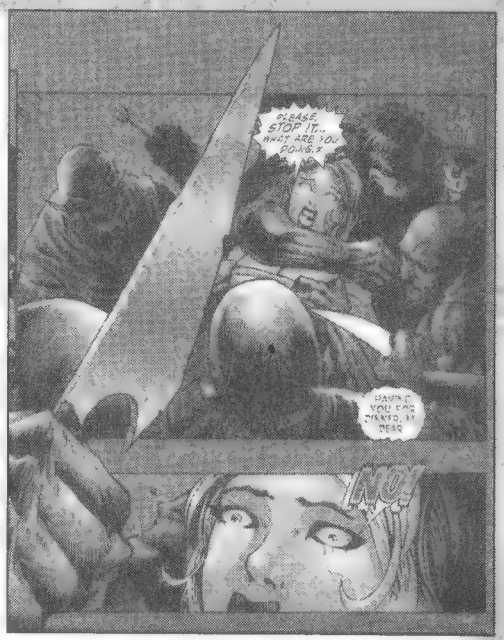
Fairy tales are fun, be they the cutesy modern adaptations, the satirical biting adaptations, or the old-school original versions full of blood, love, and rhetoric. (The blood and love are compulsory for such stories.)

Such is the case with *Grimm Fairy Tales*, and, in each issue, readers can experience the bloody and wrath-filled horror the original tales carried.

The dialogue is forced at times, but the writing boils down each story into the requisite number of pages without making it feel crunched. The art likewise does the job, sometimes adeptly, sometimes merely adequately, showing joy and fear (mostly the latter) as needed.

This first collection contains: "Red Riding Hood," "Cinderella," "Hansel & Gretel," "Rumpelstiltskin," "Sleeping Beauty," and the not-as-well-known but arguably most fun of the six, "Robber Bridegroom." Most people know the darker version of "Red Riding Hood," but probably not all of these.

In case it's not already apparent, parents, don't mistake this for the bedtime-story-for-the-kids genre — it'll mess up your kids, big time. But for adults who like horror with a moral, each story is very enjoyable.



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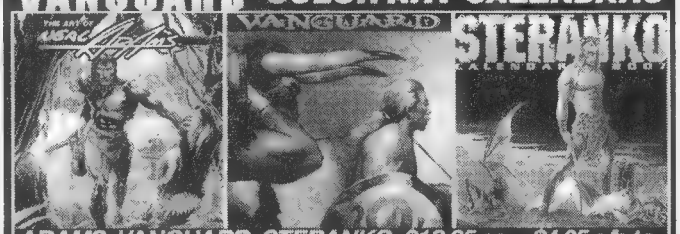

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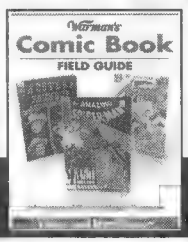

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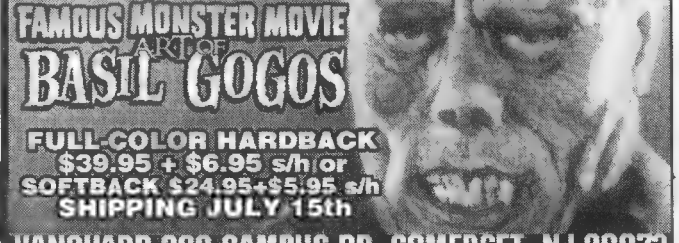

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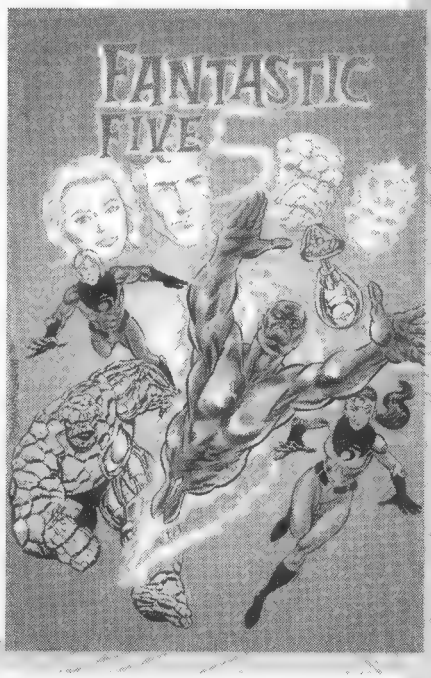
Spider-Girl Presents: The Fantastic Five — In Search of Doom

Marvel

$7.99, color, 144 pgs., available now
Writer: Tom DeFalco; Artists: Paul Ryan, Al Milgrom
reviewed by **Kurt Anthony Krug** ★★½



This digest collects the short-lived series that took place in the MC2 universe, a not-so-distant potential future of the Marvel universe where Spider-Girl is the flagship character. The Fantastic Four has now become the Fantastic Five under the leadership of The Human Torch. The roster consists of The Thing, a teenage Franklin Richards, Lyja, and Big Brain.

The series reunites the underrated Paul Ryan with his *Fantastic Four* collaborator Tom DeFalco and acts as a sequel of sorts to their 1991-96 run on the book.

DeFalco delivers a solid "meat and potatoes" super-hero story in the traditional Marvel format when he's not bound by continuity. He seems to do his best work when he's writing about alternate futures. This is one of the few alternate futures published by Marvel where the future is actually optimistic.

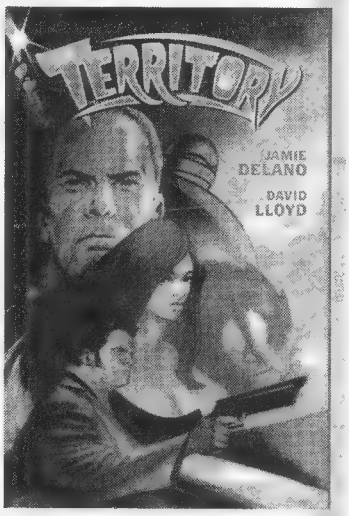
The first issue of this series pays tribute to 1961's *Fantastic Four* #1 in terms of layout — a nice touch. Torch and Lyja have a kid. The Thing had twins with the Sharon Ventura version of Ms. Marvel (who's human here). The story also reveals what happened to Reed and Sue before the FF became the F5 as the team battles Hyperstorm, Diablo, and The Wizard. Good, harmless fun.

www.marvel.com
ISBN: 0-78512-132-9

The Territory

Dark Horse

$14.95, color, 104 pgs., available now
Writer: Jamie Delano
Artist: David Lloyd
reviewed by **Tim Lasiuta** ★★★½



"In the beginning, there was only fear ..." is the perfect introduction to the story of Ishmael, man without a past, slave to a woman who will never reciprocate his love, and a man fighting for his life against impossible odds.

The Territory is a world of horror, cannibalism, corporatism, Mesh TV, Hapless Henry, and nightmares that drive Ishmael to the end of his rope. When he is captured by Hydracorp, fantasy meshes with reality, and the only casualty is his humanity.

Jamie Delano has written a tale that oozes with passion and depravity while it examines the high price of obsession and the futility of unrequited love. Readers will find different literary elements and styles, *noir*, fantasy, cartoons, and horror. Pacing and plot are excellent throughout, and the conclusion is worth the price of the book.

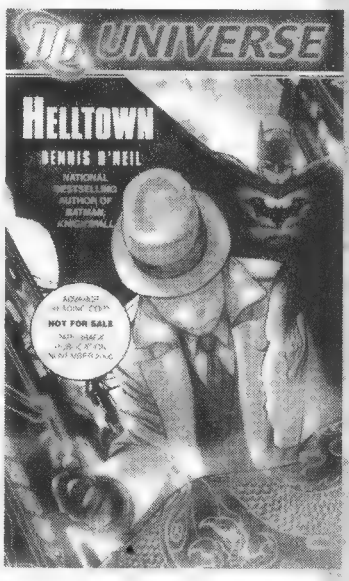
David Lloyd illustrates the dream world of Ishmael with excellence, creating the dark atmosphere in which Ishmael's journey is shrouded. It's a masterful presentation by a team of masters.

www.darkhorse.com
ISBN: 1-59307-010-1

Helltown

Warner Books

$6.99, 344 pgs., available now
Writer: Dennis O'Neil
Cover: James Dean
reviewed by **Tim Lasiuta** ★★★½



Hub City is no Kansas, Dorothy. As a matter of fact, it's probably as far removed as you can get. Corruption. Armed gangs. Odorous factories. Rigged elections. It's no place to look for your past, but that's where Vic Sage finds himself — friendless and with only a few bucks in his pocket.

But the adventure is about to begin. Finding a job with KWLM as a reporter and anchor, he uncovers the ugly secret about Reverend Hatch, Mayor Fermin, and why Hub City is the "armpit of the Midwest." A beating later and a year of intense training under Richard Dragon and Shiva's tutelage, Sage returns to clean up the mess as The Question — and it won't be pretty.

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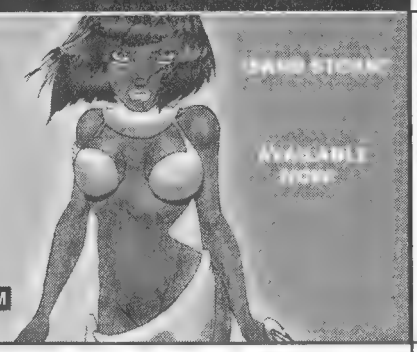

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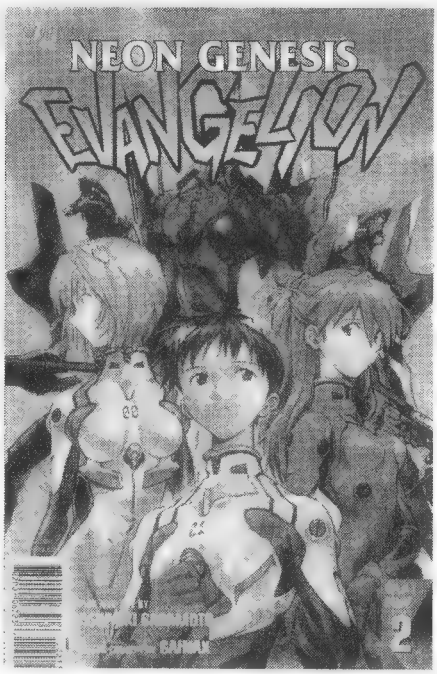
The drive of nostalgia

Taking SUPER ROBOTS out for a spin

by **BILL AGUIAR**

It can be argued that nostalgia drives the comics industry, because nostalgia surrounds products with a glow that allows you to forgive and forget bad stories. Comics are a monthly habit, and, if you stop that habit to take a break from a bad run, there is a fear among publishers that you will never come back. *Doctor Who* is a classic British TV series that was on for more than 20 years and recently made a return to television after an absence of several years. There is a saying that your favorite Doctor (the role of The Doctor has been shared by many actors) is the one with whom you grew up, the first one you spent time with. That is why comics never seem to change, why characters don't stay dead, and why publishers focus on their current readers. While those publishers want their output to be more widely read, they don't want to lose today's audience: the people who not only buy the comics, but also the spin-offs, the collectibles, the limited-edition statuettes, and so on. Caught between the classic masses and class dilemma, do you want to sell stuff to the masses or do you want to sell stuff to a better class of customers who are willing to buy higher-priced products?

Viz has published numerous* Neon Genesis Evangelion *series.



We are here to talk about manga, and there is a connection here. Many of the people who have been following manga and anime since the early days recall that, not long ago, you might see one episode or a couple untranslated chapters of a manga, and that would be all you ever saw of that title. As recently as a few years ago, I scoffed at the idea that I would ever see the manga of *Rurouni Kenshin* — other than maybe reading a fan-translated text and matching it up with an untranslated, imported manga. Now, the entire series has been published and sits in bookstores' ever-expanding graphic novel sections, and, rather than looking at the series unbiased, I am relying instead on my nostalgia-tinged memories to decide whether to buy.

That is the same reason I may watch the soon-to-be-released new *Robotech* anime: because I have such fond memories of the original, even though, when I recently rewatched, it I often cringed.

And that is how many people react to Giant or Super Robots. For many years, that is what manga and anime were: foreign cartoons with giant robots. My introduction to Super Robots was a little-known syndicated series called *Force Five*, which ran weekdays in New England when I was growing up. It was an anthology show, with a different series each day of the week, most of which focused on a super robot of some sort. The different series were badly chopped up, and, since several were longer than others, some were ended prematurely when the whole viewing cycle restarted. The series was spurred on by the success of *Shogun Warriors*, which even had a Marvel comics series for a while, and the Warrior's villains have since been incorporated into the Avengers roster of foes (Dr. Demonicus, anyone?) Some of the robots from *Force Five* actually appeared in *Shogun Warriors* comics or toy lines. I have a friend who has, over the years, managed to collect the die cast versions of the robots, which were not cheap by any stretch of the imagination. Nostalgia is a powerful force in both manga and comic books.

Which is probably why *Neon Genesis Evangelion* keeps on being remade.

Neon Genesis Evangelion is one of those conversion anime that I have mentioned, being a powerful Super Robot story that was released in the United States in the mid- to late-'90s (depending on whether you saw it from fan or official sources). It was originally an anime, but a manga was written replicating the

story, and such alternative-universe manga followed as *Neon Genesis Evangelion: Angelic Days* by ADV Manga. The original Japanese producer just announced new movies reinterpreting the original story. So much for that old saw that the Japanese manga are best known as finite stories.

Neon Genesis Evangelion tells the story of Shinji Ikari, a young man who has been separated from his father for years. It's set in 2015, and more than half the Earth's population has died from the Second Impact, which people believe was a meteorite strike on Antarctica. It's more than just that, but that's beyond the scope of the three volumes that I'm reviewing here.

Shinji has been abandoned, basically feels detached and alone — and a call by his father to join him at Tokyo-3 (one of the new Tokyos built after the destruction of the original during the chaos of the Second Impact) has him uneasy. But he doesn't have much of a chance to be uneasy, because, upon his arrival, a giant alien monster (called an Angel) attacks the city. Shinji sees it temporarily fought off by a Giant Robot at the cost of that robot's being badly injured. (Yes, the robots can be injured, being at least partly biological in nature.) But before Shinji can really grasp what is happening, Misato, one of the officers who work with his father at the organization responsible for the robots, arrives to pick him up and take him to Tokyo-3 amid the destruction and chaos that Angel is wreaking. There, he discovers that his father did not call him back from his exile to have a meaningful talk about the obvious family issues between them but, rather, so that Shinji can jump into one of the Evangelions and defend Earth.

Normally, one would want to defend Earth from a strange critter presumably from outer space. But Shinji's father acts in such a careless way (seemingly unmoved by his son's emotions and indecision) that he makes the reader want Shinji to turn him down just to wipe the smug smile off his face. Shinji does. But this fails to shake Dad, and he intends to put Rei, a badly injured pilot, back in the Evangelion. Feeling that he has no choice, Shinji enters the Evangelion to fight and maybe attract his dad's attention.

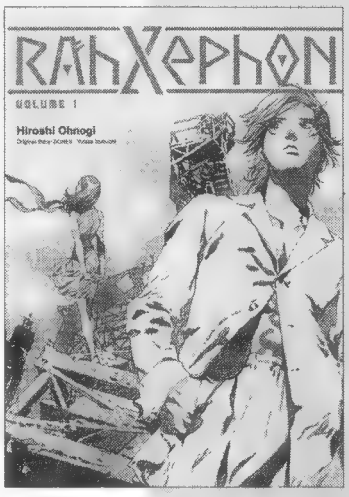
From that point, the series explores what goes on with Shinji, Misato, and Rei, with conflicts being externalized when they have to attack Angels. Someone once commented that stories about teens feeling isolated and alone attracts attention from teen readers like shooting fish in a barrel, but this is among the strongest plotlines of the story. That's mostly because the characters not only feel isolated, they *are* isolated to the extent at which I suspect any psychologist spending more than 10 minutes with them would prescribe nice big pills and a prolonged rest in a place with really comfortable jackets. These characters are genuinely wounded, physically and psychically,

and, as they struggle with it, sometimes getting better but usually backsliding, that is what makes the series interesting. And the Evas (short for the Evangelions they pilot) reflect that.

That is what Super Robots are about. More than just tools, as Real Robots are, they are usually integral to the story because they represent something bigger than the characters or the world as it seems. They pay little attention to rules of physics; they are dream machines, extensions of the pilots, intended to face specific foes greater than mere humans in the crucible of war, for the sake of survival. Isolation is a common theme, probably because, by Western standards, people in Japan are isolated. It is in the form of these tools, these Super Robots that are part human and greater than human, that individuals try to change the world — not only society but sometimes the very nature of reality itself. The goal is to reach the point at which they are no longer isolated, no longer alone, and are part of something greater.

The characters not only feel isolated, they *are* isolated to the extent at which I suspect any psychologist spending more than 10 minutes with them would prescribe nice big pills and a prolonged rest in a place with really comfortable jackets.

Rahxephon is another Giant Robot series that follows many of the same genre conventions but at least has the hope of love at its center. Unlike *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, *Rahxephon* is complete in its three volumes, but both of them were originally anime before becoming manga and so have built-in audiences. It should be noted that *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, being a conversion experience for many anime and manga fans, has many times the size of the audience of *Rahxephon*, which is seen as one of the stories that followed in its footsteps.



Rahxephon is the story of Ayato, a normal boy who has an adopted sister (Reika) and a girlfriend and lives an otherwise normal life in the Tokyo of 2015 (which seems to be a pretty eventful year). Sure, his mom is never around, and his stepsister is a little too attached to him —

which means that she and his girlfriend are at each other's throats — but, other than that, life seems pretty good until Tokyo comes under attack.

Men in black with blue blood try to kidnap him and kill Reika, and a strange person who comes out of nowhere tells him to follow her, if he wants Reika to live. From there they go to a hidden offramp of a highway tunnel to find a giant egg under the open sky, even though they are far under Tokyo Bay. They find themselves surrounded by more of the mysterious men in black, but Ayato manages to control Rahxephon, the giant mecha that is born out of the egg, and uses the mecha to rescue both Reika and Haruka, the secret agent who initially rescued them.

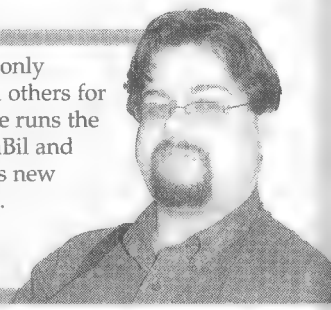
Here, the *Wizard of Oz* references reach their peak, as Ayato and Reika learn that the year is *really* 2030 and Tokyo has been behind an invisible force bubble for years, causing a time differential between the space inside and outside the bubble. The Tokyo they just fled was really ruled by the Mu, the folks with the blue blood, and the United Nations fleet on patrol outside of Tokyo Bay have weapons from more than a decade of weapon research that are now only beginning to be able to match the Mu's advanced weaponry. Not to worry: They now have Rahxephon on their side. It is a god, after all. (One of these days, I really need to do a quick discussion of Shinto, its beliefs, and how it informs the anime and manga approach to spiritualism — and what they mean, when they toss the word "god" around.)

Unfortunately, the authorities don't trust Ayato because he has lived in the enemy Tokyo his whole life but they can't get him too upset, either, because Rahxephon may turn to stone or cause it to snow on a tropical island. Still, Ayato and Reika have to discover exactly what is going on with them and understand their connection to the Mu and to the mecha Rahxephon in order to survive the weirdness that seems to have swept them up. The more they learn, the more isolated they become — not only from others, but also from humanity in general.

In Real Robot stories, the stakes are large: Will society or the nation survive this war?

But in Super Robot stories, they raise them even higher: Will humanity itself survive in a form that is recognizable?

Perhaps that is the opposite of the nostalgic stories in which the end of humanity has already occurred and the only people left are the unlucky survivors trying to eke out a living. Since science-fiction comics lost much of their popularity, there has been little room for dystopias in U.S. comics, if for no other reason than the difficulty of what you will write about next. Marvel has recently had success with its zombie universe, but, since so many manga are one-off stories, it is a lot easier for them to deal with what happens after the world ends. In anime and manga tales, that is just when things get interesting.



BILL AGUIAR not only writes this column and others for the gaming industry, he runs the game company The CaBil and schemes how to use his new MA while not sleeping.

Contact Bill at **CaBil@aol.com.**

Basilisk Vol. 2: The Kouga Ninja Scrolls

Del Rey

$13.95, b/w, 192 pgs., available now

Writer: Futaro Yamada; Artist: Masaki Segawa

reviewed by **Tim Lasiuta** ★★

This is sophisticated manga from a master of the form. *Basilisk* explores the battle between the Iga and the Kouga clans for the title of Third Tokugawa Shogun. Ten shall battle 10 to the death for the high honor, but between the hostilities, Oboro and Gennosuke's love affair has created difficulties.

OK. Theme time. Hatfields and McCoys? Romeo and Juliet? Maybe. But they didn't brandish swords, suck blood, battle naked, or fight with martial arts. But they did deem love a casualty in the war of cultures and battle for power.

The Kouga place an undercover shapeshifter into the Iga clan in order to annihilate them. At the same time, the Iga place all their hope in Oboro to defeat Gennosuke and end the centuries-old battle. At the heart of the war is the battle scroll and the names of the warriors listed on it.

The art — with photo backgrounds in many cases — is interesting and adds a consistent look to the book. It's one of the best manga I have seen.

www.delreymanga.com
ISBN: 0-345-48271-9

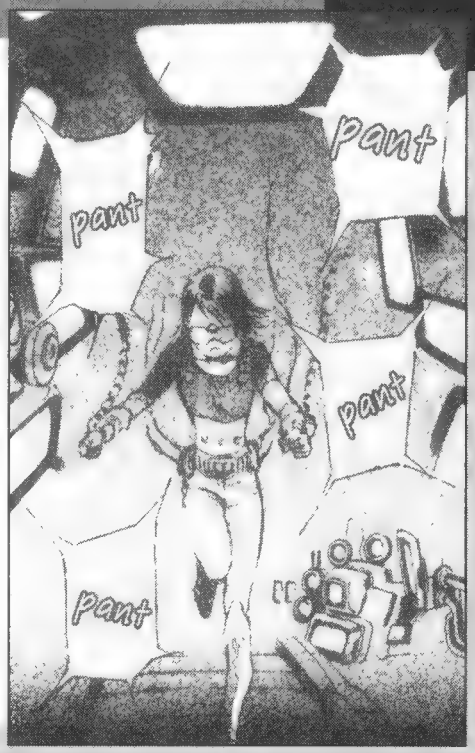
Mobile Suit Gundam: Ecoel du Ciel Vols. 1-2

Tokyopop

$9.99@, b/w, 192 pgs.@, available now

Writer and artist: Haruhiku Mikimoto

reviewed by **S.A. Bennett** ★★



During the early years of the Gundam saga, when Earth first starting edging towards war with the space colony Zeon, mobile battle suit pilots are being trained at Ecoel du Ciel, a remote military academy. There, 15-year-old Asuna is failing her classes, which is troubling for the shadowy cabal "The Council," which desperately wants to produce psychic "Newtype" warriors. But her crush on her classmate Shin inspires her to do better.

Asuna is a normal girl, worrying about grades, her chest measurements, and fitting in — which isn't easy, seeing as her father is wanted for war crimes and she comes from a space colony. In Volume 2, the cast goes into outer space, where Asuna has a strained reunion with her mother and flashes back to her uncomfortable first days at school.

There are bits of both *Starship Troopers* and *Neon Genesis Evangelion* to be found in this agreeable soap opera drawn in a highly illustrative style. Each volume is also loaded with helpful background material on the characters and their world.

www.tokyopop.com

ISBN: 1-59532-851-3

Claymore Vol. 1

Viz

$9.99, b/w, 208 pgs., available now

Writer and artist: Norihiro Yagi

reviewed by **Oliver Chin** ★★½

Borrowing their name from a landmine, Claymores are dangerously explosive human weapons against the beasts called Yoma that plague civilization and impersonate their quarry. Claire is one of these icy female slayers, blessed with these demons' extraordinary power but cursed with the inevitable fate that she may fully become one unless she successfully combats their primal urges.

Armed with a lethal sword, she is a mysterious exterminator for hire, wandering from town to town. As she cleanses another hamlet, she gains an unwanted liability in the process. Young Raki loses his brother, follows his new idol, and uncovers the secret history of Claymores on behalf of the reader. Will the stoic Clare avoid the fate of her colleague Elena, who faces the unavoidable transformation into a dreaded Yoma?

This version of *Berserk* for girls treads familiar territory, as Norihiro Yagi competently depicts stark slasher scenes. However, as it balances the gender role reversal with the thematic duality of heroine versus victim, this title offers few surprises other than a gal going medieval.

www.viz.com

ISBN: 1-42150-618-1

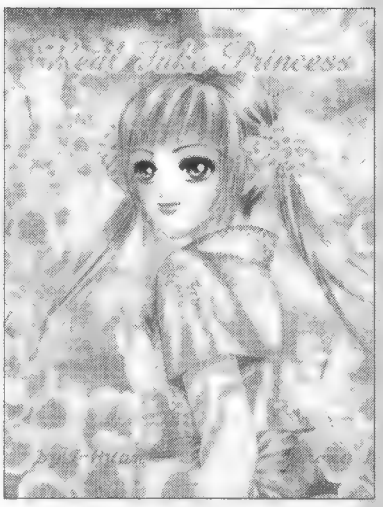
Real/Fake Princess Vol. 1

Dr.Master

$9.95, b/w, 176 pgs., available now

Writer and artist: I-Huan

reviewed by **Oliver Chin** ★★½



It was only a matter of time before we got Chinese comics (in this case, specifically Taiwanese) and a love triangle, to boot. In bygone times on the mainland, the emperor of the Tang Dynasty dispatches his loyal soldier Zhong Lu to be a "seeker," entrusted with finding his princess who was sent into hiding a decade earlier at the start of the Jin rebellion.

Meanwhile, Dr. Tang tells his feisty "sister" Zhi Li that she must return to claim her rightful title as princess. Despite his suspicions that she is an imposter, Zhong realizes she is the real deal and may be winning his heart. But Zhi is reluctant to accept the benefits of royalty, if it means separation from her principled Dr. Tang.

Although the series' title could use some work, it hits the familiar *shojo* notes of unrequited love and historical fantasy. Huan draws the expected crying saucer eyes and alabaster complexions, but his faces and figures are stiff. However, female genre fans will find these Chinese romantic misunderstandings suitable soap opera.

www.drmasterbooks.com

ISBN: 1-59796-079-9

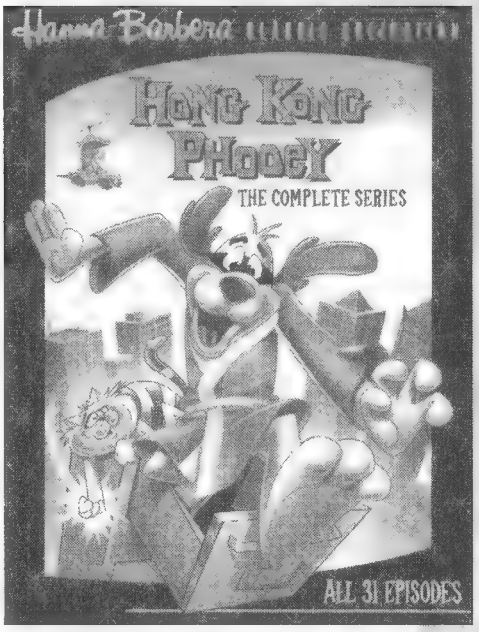
VIDEO REVIEWS

Hong Kong Phooey: The Complete Series

Warner Bros. Home Video

$26.98, color, 397 min./2 DVDs, available now

reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★★★



Before children's cartoons switched over to the adult *double-entendre*, there were fine shows like *Hong Kong Phooey*. Don't get me wrong: Having humor that children will miss but adults will enjoy in cartoons is fine, but it seems *every* animation creator has adopted that philosophy, so keen shows like *Hong Kong Phooey* have become a forgotten archetype. To anyone above a child's age, this show probably isn't all that impressive, but, to a child, it definitely is.

The adventures of Penrod "Penry" Pooch, aka "the mild-mannered janitor," still delight kids. Voiced by the late Scatman Crothers — who also sang the catchy theme song (tell me you don't have it bouncing around your fu-rific brain) — the hero continually finds new ways to utilize his kung-fu philosophy to help (and hinder) his cohorts and him as they fight crime.

The extras are enjoyable and entertaining enough, though by far the real thrill comes from the episodes themselves — all 31 of them. Round up the kids (and grandkids, if that be the case), and enjoy some six hours of Phooey fun.

The downside? Well, none with this fantastic set, but, as with too many DVD releases nowadays, it often heralds a new incarnation. Sure enough, the Internet Movie Database lists a new *Hong Kong Phooey* for 2008. *Puh*-lease …

www.warnerbros.com

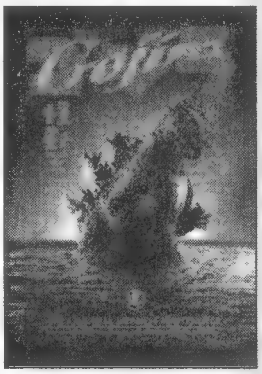
ISBN: 1-59536-099-9

Gojira

Classic Media

$21.98, color, 200min., available now

reviewed by **Oliver Chin** ★★★½



You know the story. Big lizard meets big city. Monster torches Tokyo. Godzilla dumps human civilization for the cool caress of the Pacific Ocean. A typical love triangle nowadays, but did you know that Big G originally never actually squared off against our fearless reporter Raymond Burr face to face?

This two-disc set allows the viewer to compare and contrast the uncut 98-minute Japanese version with the familiar American adaptation, which toned down the anti-U.S. tenor and ramped up the camp. Sure, the rubber suit later mutated into a post-modern parody that parented nearly two dozen cinematic offspring, including the 1998 abomination with Matthew Broderick. But the real "Gojira" transcended his surrounding dioramas to become a legend in the minds of the Odo islanders and SF fanatics because of his mesmerizing iconoclasm.

Created in the midst of 1950's atomic worries, this 1954 behemoth was originally cast as a caution against nuclear apocalypse instead of being a celebration of it. This reminder to learn from history still remains all too relevant today.

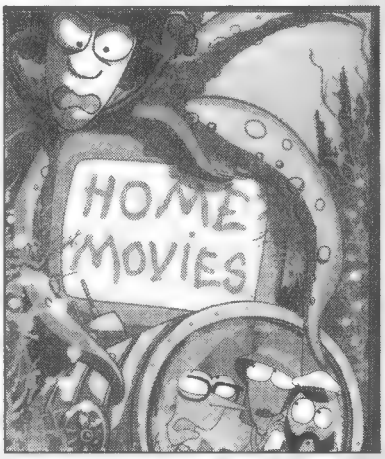
www.godzillaondvd.com

Home Movies: Season 4

Shout Factory

$34.98, color, 3 DVDs/1 CD, available now

reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★½



Home Movies is one of those cult hits that often has trouble finding a larger audience. Its dry humor often has the effect of viewers going several minutes with nary a chuckle, though the payoff comes in big, laugh-out-loud bursts, and some episodes are funnier than others.

Such is the case with this, the Cartoon Network Adult Swim show's final season. There are wonderful episodes, such as "Camp," which features They Might Be Giants as music-camp counselors of the awful variety. The CD accompanying this set includes dozens of songs, including a TMBG one from "Camp."

The show operates with subtlety, with a calmness that belies its edginess. This, of course, makes it all the more entertaining, when that edginess shines through.

At $35 for some six hours of entertainment, this seems a bit steep for what *Home Movies* offers. But for those into dry humor and relaxing animation, it may well be worth checking out. According to Shout Factory, the show still airs on Cartoon Network and continues to garner higher ratings among men aged 18-24 than David Letterman or Jimmy Kimmel — for what it's worth.

www.shoutfactory.com

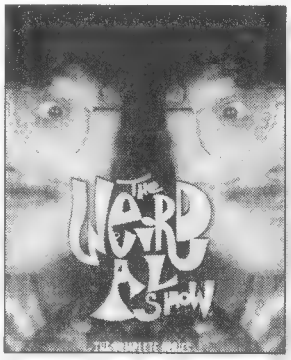
ISBN: 0-7389-3438-0

The Weird Al Show: The Complete Series

Shout Factory

$34.98, color, 3 DVDs, available now

reviewed by **Ray Sidman** ★★★



For many people, this DVD set serves as a key piece to the Weird Al completist puzzle. The entire 13-episode series from 1997 is presented with lots of extras.

The show is targeted primarily at children but with something for the older crowd, even adults. The humor is what drives the show, with each episode featuring a lesson to be learned (such as think for yourself and don't make promises you can't keep), usually exemplified by Weird Al's many self-induced misadventures. And then there's Harvey the Wonder Hamster.

Kids can appreciate the sight gags, slapstick, and general silliness. Weird Al's older fans will appreciate his trademark offbeat sense of humor, especially in the hilarious "educational films" (such as "Where Does Dirt Come From?") that pop up regularly.

The show entertains, and one wonders — though I'm a biased longtime Weird Al fan who watched the show when it first aired — why it didn't run longer than 13 episodes. While there have been better children's shows, this one is nonetheless far better than many of the ones airing then — or now.

This is compulsory for Weird Al fans. For parents looking for a good, fun, entertaining way to teach kids important lessons — or even just to entertain them — this DVD set would be a good investment.

www.shoutfactory.com

ISBN #: 0-7389-3450-X

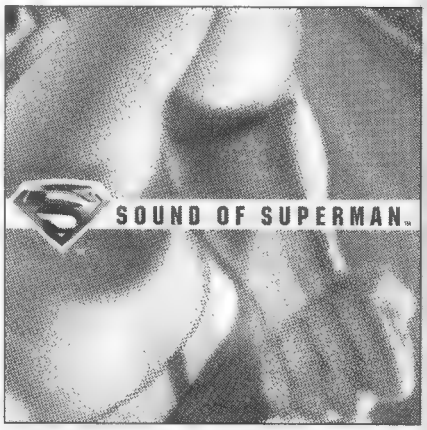
Sound of Superman (CD)

Rhino Entertainment

$13.98, available now

Various artists

reviewed by **Jack Abramowitz** ★★½



The songs on this CD have more of a thematic linchpin in the form of The Man of Steel than they do any compelling musical glue that binds them together. Stylistically, they run the gamut, from Paramore's ballad "My Hero" (which slows the CD to a lethargic pace) to the bouncy and fun "Brainiac's Daughter" by Royal.

Perhaps most noteworthy are the remakes of classic Superman-themed hits. The Sun's version of "(Wish I Could Fly Like) Superman" is pleasant enough, but The Kinks' original is still the one to beat. On the other hand, The Films' cover of "Sunshine Superman" is true to Donovan's original but more in line with current tastes.

Not every Man of Steel tribute is here. You won't find The Spin Doctors' "Jimmy Olsen's Blues." It's also interesting that they didn't update "Can You Read My Mind?" (the insipid love theme from the original *Superman* movie).

With its wide variety of artists and approaches, *Sound of Superman* is worth trying. Some of the songs are bound to resonate with you.

www.rhino.com

Metal Gear Solid Digital Graphic Novel

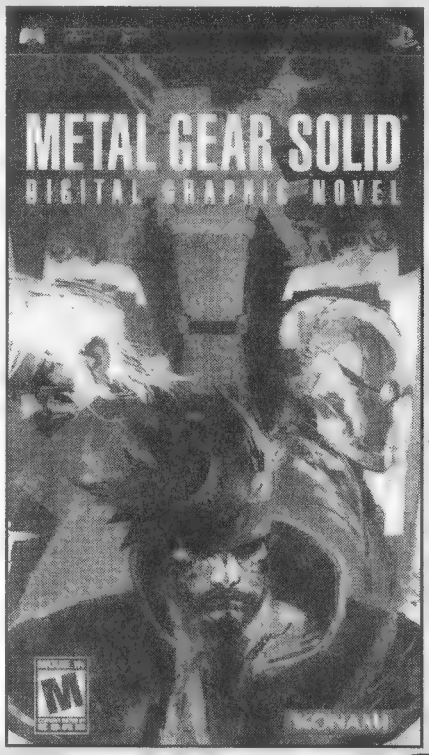
Konami

$29.99, color, available now

Writer: Kris Oprisko

Artist: Ashley Wood

reviewed by **Brent Frankenhoff** ★★★



IDW's comics mini-series based on the videogame series returns to a videogame format with Konami's release of its first digital graphic novel for the Playstation Portable (PSP).

The Universal Media Disc (UMD) looks like a tiny DVD encased in a hard plastic shell just like other releases for the portable gaming system.

The loadtime is short and readers, er, um, players are quickly immersed into the book with animated panels, a subtle soundtrack, and occasional sound effects. The original text comes alive with each caption or word balloon delivered as needed in the planned sequence. At times, things move too quickly and rewinding to review is difficult.

A fresh aspect of the project is an option where one can scan the panels with a targeting circle that zooms in, looking for memories to retrieve. These saved memories can then be sorted and interconnected on another screen, giving additional background on the characters and situations that Solid Snake encounters.

It's a good use of the PSP's capabilities and Konami has also produced *Silent Hill Experience*. However, save points need to be easier to find (there is a bookmark option, but it isn't easy to locate) and viewing controls need to be more user friendly and intuitive.

www.konami.com

Warning! Warning!
Do not read further unless you are ready to face ...

The 2006 Mopee Awards!

by **CRAIG SHUTT**

Dear Mr. Silver Age:
Zut alors! My seekth sense tells me zat it eez once again time for ze dreaded Awards of ze Mopee! Weel zees pairhaps be ze year when you present zees ignominious prizes to ze worst villains to show zere faces during ze Age of ze Silver, like zat Paste-Pot imbecile? Sacré bleu, I can hardly wait to see who will win zees statues horribles zis yair!

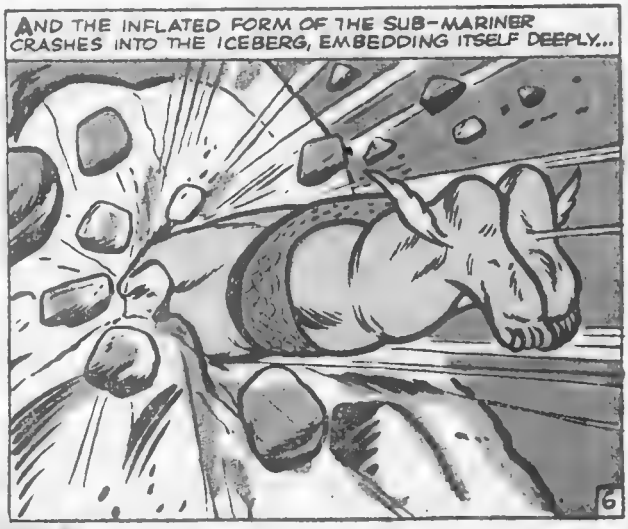
Batroc T.L.
Mobile, Ala.

Mr. Silver Age says: It's always nice to hear from you, Bat, although you really ought to work on your spelling. I agree that the line of villains worthy to receive Mopee Awards stretches out the door and all the way to the trash can, and no doubt a guy whose power consists of a glue gun is right near the front (or the back, depending on how you look at it). Does he really stand much chance against his arch-foe, a guy who can shoot fire back at him? Only in the Mopeeverse! On the other hand, he might easily bring down a villain whose only power is to have really long legs and a mighty high center of gravity.

But we won't be dealing with those worthies this time out, Bat. Maybe there's an

Did you know Namor possessed the power of all the creatures of the sea? Neither did most fans until they read* Strange Tales *#107.

BUT NAMOR HAS OTHER RESOURCES, FOR HE POSSESSES THE POWERS OF ALL THE CREATURES LIVING BENEATH THE SEA!
MUST ACT FAST! I'LL ENLARGE MYSELF AS A PUFFER* DOES!
EDITOR'S NOTE: PUFFERS, ALSO KNOWN AS SWELLFISHES, CAN INFLATE THEIR BODIES WITH AIR OR WATER TILL THEY SWELL TO THREE TIMES THEIR NORMAL SIZE!



THE SUB-MARINER, USING ANOTHER OF HIS FISH-LIKE POWERS, SURROUNDS HIMSELF WITH ELECTRICITY IN THE MANNER OF AN ELECTRIC EEL, AS HE LEAPS TO MEET THE ONCOMING TORCH! AND THEN...
WHOOM!

Namor used his ability to mimic an electric eel to stun The Human Torch (and readers) in* Strange Tales *#107.

all-villain edition of the Mopee Awards in our future. This time, we're going to get back on track after last year's very special Mopee presentations (in ***CBG*** #1613) for ideas that just refused to die after one issue. Now, we're returning to the tried-and-true one-time goofiness that lurked in the pages of our favorite DC and Marvel Silver Age super-hero titles.

The Mopee Awards are named, of course, for the little goofball who claimed in *Flash* #167 (Feb 67) that he'd given Barry Allen his super-powers. The awards are presented to issues of our favorite top-of-the-line Silver Age super-hero titles that were trying their best to provide us with shock and awe. In a few rare cases, what with deadlines being what they were and the audience being mostly kiddies of a less discerning nature who ate up this stuff with a spoon, the stories delivered more shock than awe — especially today, as we look back on them from the perspective of (gulp) 40 years of semi-maturity.

We would just as soon forget that Mopee ever existed and we probably would do the same with these stories, if we weren't laughing so hard at ourselves for loving this wacky stuff. The truth is, we're still eating up this stuff with a spoon, and by now we ought to know better! These stories are part and parcel of the charm that makes the Silver Age so memorable today (along with being the beginning of a hefty chunk of the characters that still drive the comics industry, of course). Even so, these probably are not the issues you want to be pulling out when one of your friends asks what was so great about this so-called Silver Age they've heard so much about.

You might think that the number of candidates would be shrinking by now, since Mr. Silver Age has been featuring a half-dozen of these little beauties in his annual Turkey-time celebration for eight years now. That's especially true, since we spotlight only the prime-time DC and Marvel heroes, as turning the spotlight on quirky super-heroes from other companies would be too easy. But after I threw caution to the wind last year and ripped the lid off that long box of *Lois Lane* and *Jimmy Olsen* issues, we could be here forever! I'm not tired — or proud.

Keep in mind, there's a difference between stories that deserve Mopee Awards and stories that deserve to *be* Mopees. The Awards go to Silver Age stories that feature goofy, floor-rolling scenarios that make us wonder why we thought this stuff ever made sense in the first place. Mopee *stories*, as Captain Comics has dubbed them, are ones that have to vanish for the sake of our sanity.

Superman #205 (Apr 68), in which The Man of Steel discovered that his father was wrong about Krypton exploding and that it had been blown up instead by the alien Black Zero, is just so very, very wrong that it needs to be Mopee-ized. *Journey into Mystery* #89 (Feb 63), in which Jane Foster dreams of marrying The Mighty Thor so she can polish his hammer and iron his cape, deserves a Mopee Award (which it received in ***CBG*** #1410).

As always, after shaking up the barrel of Mopees so that more than the cream rose to the top, three comics from DC and three from Marvel were skimmed off to receive awards this year. And here's what the envelope says:

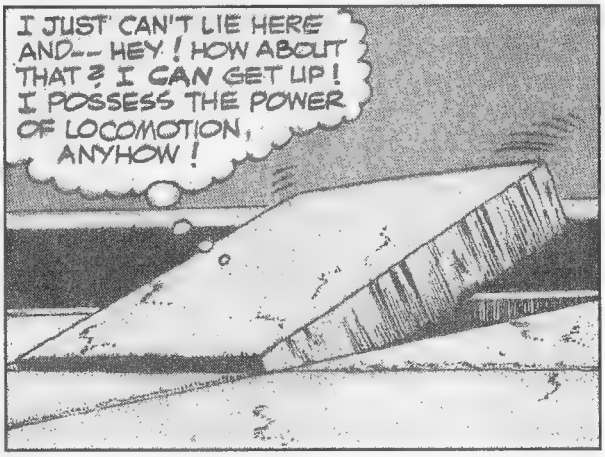
1. The **If It Walks like a Duck and Quacks like a Duck, It Could Be The Sub-Mariner Award** goes to "The Human Torch Face-to-Face with Prince Namor, The Mighty Sub-Mariner!" in *Strange Tales* #107 (Apr 63).

Longtime fans of the Mopee Awards are aware that *Strange Tales* was perhaps the best-named title of the Silver Age, especially those early adventures in which Johnny (Human Torch) Storm lived in the New York suburbs with his sister Sue (Invisible Girl). Wacky doings, wimpy villains, and more hilarity than The Impossible Man could have conjured up on his best day were the norm. This issue helped keep that tradition humming, as The Human Torch faced off against a powered-up Sub-Mariner — who showed off powers he'd never had before and would never use again, thank goodness.

Our tale got under way with Johnny feeling ostracized by the "adult" members of the group, who didn't have to spend their days dragging through school. To prove his worth, he decided to solve a big case or catch a colorful villain all by himself. Trouble was, there weren't many of those hanging around outside his door in

Mopee Awards!

The Stone-Like Speedster decided to go for a stroll after Doctor Light gave him a concrete defeat in* Flash *#171.



Glenville, N.Y. Seeing the photo of Namor that Sue kept on her desk, Johnny decided that beating the living seaweed out of his sister's friend would put him in good with his teammates. Let's not think about the logic of that one, since Johnny certainly didn't.

The Torch went off to challenge Namor to a battle, something that *villains* usually did to lure *heroes* to them, but never mind. The Sub-Mariner didn't take the bait (sorry), but a school of flying fish accidentally flew through Johnny's flame-message, and Subby came up to see who was barbecuing his finny friends. Namor told Torch to get off his watery lawn, Torch threw a flaming lasso around him, and the battle was on.

Subby flung himself at the flying flamer, who dodged out of the way, leaving Namor to plow into an iceberg. Fortunately, before The Sub-Mariner hit the berg, he used his ability to mimic "all the creatures living beneath the sea," as the caption told us, and blew himself up like a puffer fish.

That's right, he blew himself up like a puffer fish, giving himself a physique that the Inferior Five's Blimp would have envied. Once embedded in the berg, he simply exhaled again, restored his original physique, and escaped!

Namor then captured Johnny, using asbestos he found undersea and a hypnotic idol head that mesmerized The Torch. Yes, you read that right, and we're not going to linger on it. Don't think, just read it! He tied Johnny to a dolphin he commandeered (Don't think!), but Johnny escaped, and Namor took him down once again by surrounding himself with electricity, just like an electric eel!

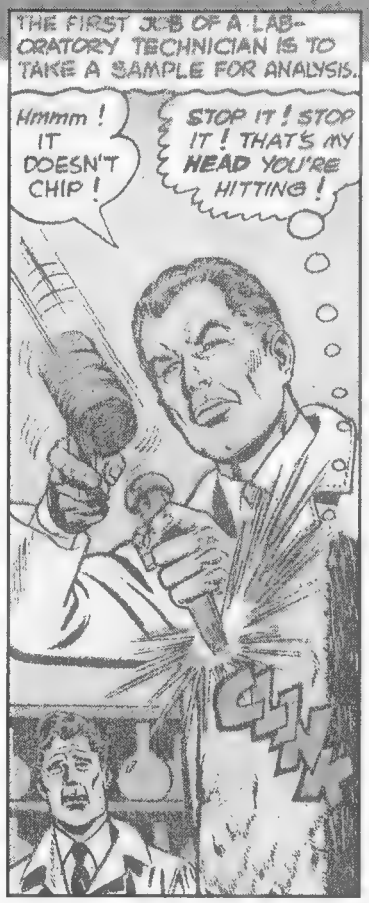
That's right, he electrified himself using his electric-eel power, which stunned Johnny and dunked him in the drink (Just read it)! In return, Johnny increased the intensity of his flame to super-nova level, which produced flame so hot that "it evaporates the waters around it, forming an air pocket for The Torch to breathe in." I figured you wouldn't believe me, if I didn't quote the caption. I'm still working on which part of that bit of Marvel science makes any sense whatsoever.

I think we've spent enough time here, even though, sadly, our story still had a ways to go. Subby escaped from Johnny's final trap by turning himself into a human drill to burrow free of the cave-in where he was entombed. Subby bemoaned Johnny's immaturity, Johnny returned home to collapse in exhaustion, no doubt from trying to figure out where all of Subby's new powers came from, and readers turned the page, hoping that either the "Secret Weapon" or "Treasure of Planetoid 12" backup story would redeem the issue. They were destined to be disappointed.

So here's your very own Mopee Award, Subby! You may be shocked at receiving this prize just for showing off spiffy super-powers, but at least it won't be stunning you with its brand new Mopee electro-vision!

2. The **A Concrete Way to Defeat Your Foe! Award** goes to "Here Lies The Flash — Dead and Unburied!" in *The Flash* #171 (Jun 67).

That wacky Doctor Light just never gave up trying to defeat a hero — *any* hero — and this time he took on The Flash with a pretty nifty gizmo. His Photonikron allowed him to warp


THE FIRST JOB OF A LABORATORY TECHNICIAN IS TO TAKE A SAMPLE FOR ANALYSIS.
Hmmm! IT DOESN'T CHIP!
STOP IT! STOP IT! THAT'S MY HEAD YOU'RE HITTING!
CLINK

Careener, when a guy walked on top of him. Realizing this would cause serious problems over the long haul (especially as he saw a dog approaching), The Ace of Acceleration *lifted himself up* out of the sidewalk and began to "walk" down the street.

Pedestrians were a bit flummoxed to see a hunk of concrete strolling down the boulevard, so a cop corralled the escaping sidewalk and took it to the police lab — where the scientists all wished Barry Allen were around to help them figure it out. Irony alert!

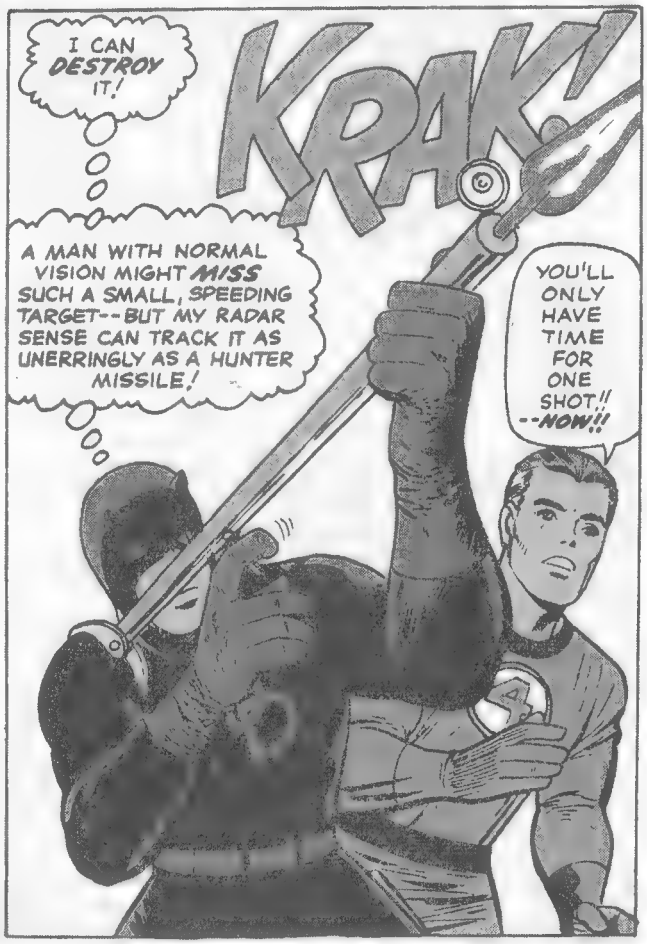
First, the police technician tried to take a sample by hitting the concrete with a hammer and chisel. "Stop it!" our concrete hero thought. "That's my light around himself to take on any appearance, which he used to commit crimes and spy on The Fastest Man Alive while in the guise of a tiny spider.

The police "scientists" examining our hero in* Flash *#171 apparently bought their scientific equipment at Home Depot.

After much deviltry, The Lord of Luminescence captured The Scarlet Speedster and used his gadget to create a terrible death trap: He transformed the light around our hero so that he appeared to be *a slab of concrete*! Then, he used a handy pickup truck with a winch to cut out a slab of sidewalk in Central City's downtown business district and lower The Flash into the square to stay until he withered and rotted away! Which, come to think of it, takes quite a while with concrete.

When The Vizier of Velocity awoke, his thoughts revealed the terrible calamity he faced: "Good gosh — I must be having a nightmare! I think I'm a slab of stone!" It no doubt felt even more calamitous than that time when (you know where I'm going) Abra Kadabra gave him the sinking suspicion that he'd been turned into a puppet back in #133 (Dec 62). Clearly, this guy was the most empathetic superhero around!

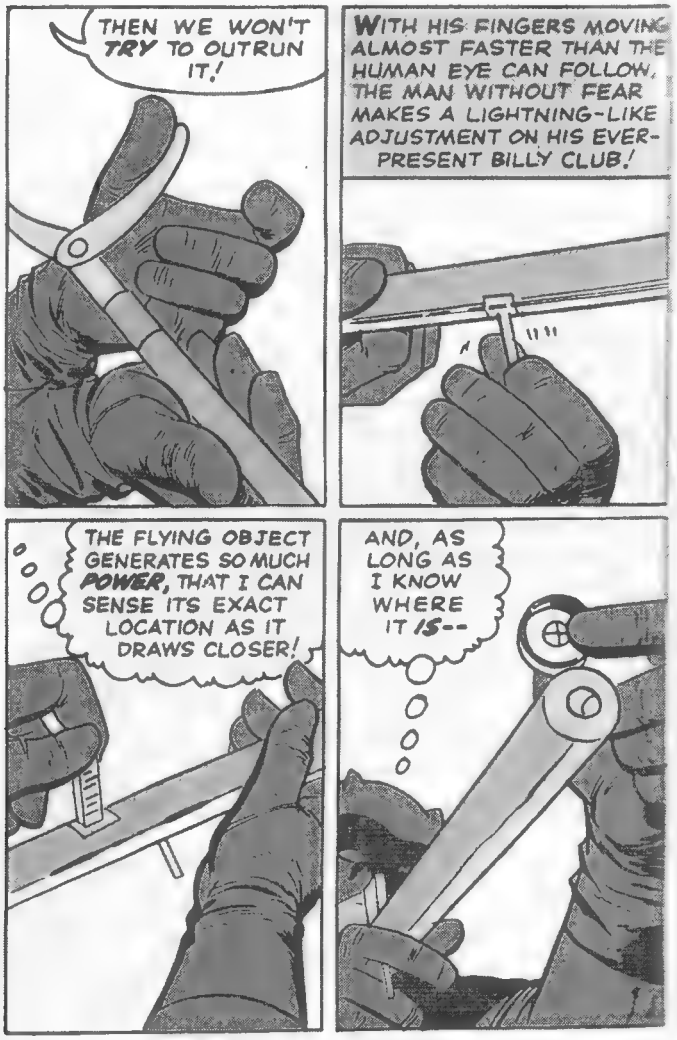
The problems immediately manifested themselves for The Concrete


I CAN DESTROY IT!
KRAK!
A MAN WITH NORMAL VISION MIGHT MISS SUCH A SMALL, SPEEDING TARGET--BUT MY RADAR SENSE CAN TRACK IT AS UNERRINGLY AS A HUNTER MISSILE!
YOU'LL ONLY HAVE TIME FOR ONE SHOT!! --NOW!!

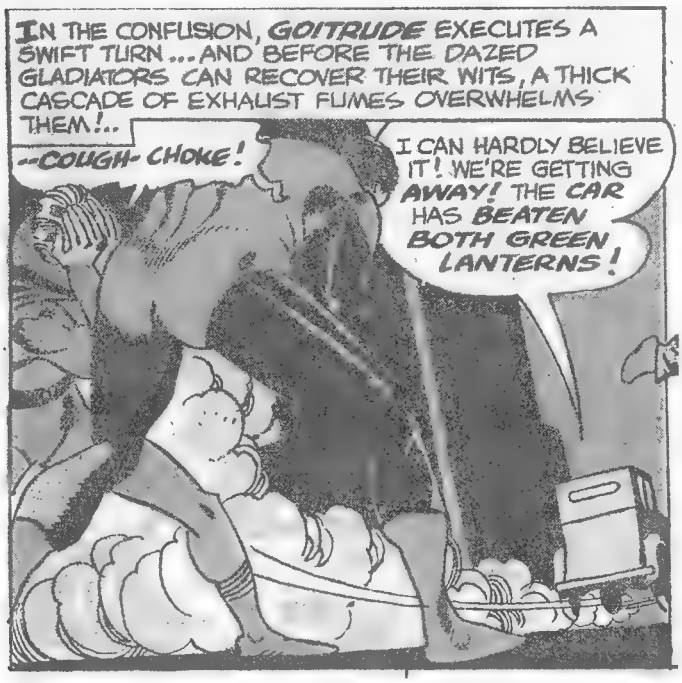
Good thing Daredevil had the foresight to include an option for turning his billy club into a shoulder-mounted rifle in* Fantastic Four *#40.

Mopee Awards!

"That must be one heckuva good cross-hair scope on your makeshift rifle," Reed said to DD in* FF *#40. "Scope?" DD replied.


THEN WE WON'T TRY TO OUTRUN IT!
WITH HIS FINGERS MOVING ALMOST FASTER THAN THE HUMAN EYE CAN FOLLOW, THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR MAKES A LIGHTNING-LIKE ADJUSTMENT ON HIS EVER-PRESENT BILLY CLUB!
THE FLYING OBJECT GENERATES SO MUCH POWER, THAT I CAN SENSE ITS EXACT LOCATION AS IT DRAWS CLOSER!
AND, AS LONG AS I KNOW WHERE IT IS--

Some truly toxic exhaust fumes felled the warriors wielding the most powerful weapons in the universe in* Green Lantern *#52.


IN THE CONFUSION, GOITRUDE EXECUTES A SWIFT TURN ... AND BEFORE THE DAZED GLADIATORS CAN RECOVER THEIR WITS, A THICK CASCADE OF EXHAUST FUMES OVERWHELMS THEM!..
--COUGH- CHOKE!
I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE IT! WE'RE GETTING AWAY! THE CAR HAS BEATEN BOTH GREEN LANTERNS!

head you're hitting!" Kids, if you believe nothing else Mr. Silver Age has told you, lo these many years, take this to heart: Unless you're a DC super-hero like The Flash, it's going to do more than leave a mark if someone *hits you in the head with a hammer and chisel!*

When *that* didn't work, the scientists threw water on The Scarlet Slab of Solidified Cement, picked at him with tweezers, kicked him (very scientific), and finally took a lunch break. That's when The Pharaoh of Photons arrived, we learned that Flash's vibrations had caused the effect to differ from what Light had planned, and things went on their way toward wrapping up.

So here's your Mopee Award for a death trap that surpasses even that puppetizing deal you recognized so readily, Flash! We made sure to chisel this beauty out of something besides concrete so you wouldn't have to keep walking by it and thinking, "I know just how that feels!"

3. The **"Ready! Aim! Um, I Said Aim!" Award** goes to "The Battle of the Baxter Building!" in *Fantastic Four* #40 (Jul 65).

Make no mistake, this entire story doesn't deserve a Mopee — in fact, it's one of my favorite *FF* tales and one well worthy of pushing into your skeptical friends' faces when they want to see why the Silver Age was so darned exciting. But there's this one moment when I had to stop reading to mop up the Nehi I'd spewed onto the ground.

No doubt you know the story: The FF, having lost their powers, were in a tight fix when Doctor Doom took over their headquarters and began to use its weapons against them. During the initial melee (which began in *FF* #39), they met up with Daredevil, who agreed to draw Doom's fire while the powerless team attacked from another direction.

The wackiness had actually begun in that earlier issue, as DD began his frontal assault on the Baxter Building. Doom launched a fragment grenade that knocked The Man without

AS THE TRIO LANDS... SUDDENLY...
IT'S ME-- DOIBY-- UHH
THOSE HEAD-LIGHTS AGAIN- BUT THIS TIME SOME STRANGE NEW POWER S COMING OUT OF THEM--!

Fear from his wire-walking perch, and he grabbed the wire to keep from falling to his doom. As he hung there in mid-air on the last page of the story, he thought, "It was no picnic being a sitting duck for a marksman like Doctor Doom — but it'll be great for my rep if I survive!"

Generally, in the list of stuff that would be better off, if DD and the FF defeated Dr. Doom, I would have started with 1. The Free World, 2. The People of New York City, 3. The Fantastic Four, and 4. Daredevil Himself, all of which would probably cease to exist if this attack didn't work. DD's rep would have been further down my list. Way further down. Putting such a self-centered thought into Matt's noggin as he dangled over the city, a hairsbreadth from death, indicated the length to which Stan would go to fill up some of the white space that Jack sometimes included in his panels.

But that's only the sidelight to the real howler that came only a few pages later, albeit in the next issue. As #40 opened, ol' Doc Doom, to prevent any surprise attacks, launched a flying spotter to track the heroes as they progressed. Thankfully, Daredevil was ready for just such a problem.

In a series of small panels, we watched, as DD opened a shoulder rest built into the handle end of his billy club, flipped down a trigger halfway up the shaft, loaded a clip of bullets into another slot in the middle, raised a sight with cross-hairs on the end of the club, raised it to his shoulder, and shot the flying spotter right out of the air!

Yes, that's right, DD had a rifle built into his billy club! Right alongside the tape-recorder, the retractable cable, the gas pellets, and the space to store the cane's handle when he turned it into a two-piece billy club! Let's not even think about that two-piece problem or where he kept his clips of bullets, how they were chambered, and how they shot past all those other gadgets. Heck, let's not even think about who bored the chamber on this doodad. No, instead, let's consider DD aiming through the crosshairs of that sight.

Daredevil noted that a man with normal vision probably would miss the target, but he could track it with his radar sense. Given that, what the heck was the purpose of the sight? To fool people into thinking he was using it to aim? Was it really worth wasting the time to set it into place for that charade, let alone finding a way to insert it when he decided to add the rifle option into his cane?

Needless to say, DD's one shot with his billy-gun was right on target, and the spotter went crashing down. So did the logic of his gun, which, thankfully, was never seen again.

But that won't stop us from giving The Man with Way Too Many Gadgets a Mopee for these oddities in an otherwise-impressive guest appearance. You might want to give your statue a good going over with that radar sense, Matt, because there's no telling *what* is hidden inside of that goofball.

4. The **"Maybe a Storage Unit Would've Worked Better!" Award** goes to "Our Mastermind the Car!" in *Green Lantern* #52 (Apr 67).

No, the award is not for the issue's title, at least not *solely* for that embarrassment. The name was a play on the 1965 one-season-wonder TV sitcom *My Mother the Car*, a show that put way more emphasis on the sit than

As Doiby tried to talk some sense into Goitrude's oil pan, the car's headlights blinded the GLs of two Earths in* GL *#52.

IN FACT, IT SOUNDS TO ME AS THOUGH THEY'RE STARTING TO SPUTTER NOW... AND IT COULDN'T HAVE HAPPENED AT A BETTER TIME!
HE'S RIGHT! I'VE OVER-TAXED MY TRANSISTORS! C-CAN'T REMAIN ALOFT ANY LONGER!
14.

What are the chances? Just as Iron Man captured Angel in* Tales of Suspense *#49, his transistor power gave out!

on the com. That DC was doing homages to such stuff in its super-hero comics is one more reason we hang the "charming" tag on the Silver Age, assuming your definition of "charming" is vast.

Our story, as with the TV show, centered on a car that had a personality trapped inside. In this case, it was Goitrude, the taxi driven by Doiby Dickles, the sidekick to the Earth-2 (*i.e.*, Golden Age) Green Lantern. The tale began with Alan Scott plotting with Earth-1's GL, Hal Jordan, to take Goitrude to Doiby on the planet where he now lived (long story). Hal had been storing Goitrude in his garage for just such an event, but, when the GLs went to retrieve it, they found it gone!

The Angel broke free of the transistorized grip of Iron Man in* Tales of Suspense *#49 by wielding his power to, um, make the story last longer.

BUT NOT REALIZING THE EXTENT OF THE ANGEL'S PERSONALITY CHANGE, IRON MAN CARELESSLY RELAXES HIS GRIP FOR AN INSTANT AND...
HE BROKE AWAY FROM ME!
CAN'T BE THAT UNTHINKING WHEN YOU'RE DEALING WITH AN X-MAN, CHUM! OR SHOULD I SAY.... AN EX-X-MAN??!
HEY! HOW COME I DON'T HEAR YOU LAUGHING? THAT WAS A GAS!

The car was tooling around town aiding criminals all on its own! First, it helped bank robbers escape from the cops; then, it helped them hold up an armored car. The GLs tracked it down, but it escaped by first blinding them with its headlights and then overwhelming the two warriors wearing the most powerful weapons in the galaxy by spraying them with its exhaust fumes. But we can't linger here, so I hope you weren't swallowing any Pepsi as you read that.

Puzzled by Goitrude's criminal nature, the GLs beamed Doiby back to Earth and sadly revealed Goitrude had taken up crime. No lie, that's what they told him. Alan explained, "Because you and Goitrude have always been so close ... if you could only appeal to the car —" Yep, GL-2 wanted Doiby to persuade Goitrude to give up its life of crime. Being the criminal's owner, one who liked to humor guys wearing the most powerful weapons in the universe, Doiby agreed to try to talk some sense into the old car.

Unfortunately, when they next confronted the car, which literally could be described as "cranky," it paralyzed all three heroes. Then it tapped into the power of both power rings to free its personality. And it turned out to be, shock of shocks, Sinestro!

Yes, Sinestro! The renegade GL who was Hal's arch-foe! The villain who "has always stood in these pages as the very personification of evil!" the caption told us. The miscreant who was displayed prominently on the cover, so it really was less of a surprise than the story's creators apparently expected when the mind behind Goitrude was revealed on page 13. Oops. (And, OK, since it wasn't just *any* car blinding them with its high beams and choking them with exhaust, we'll give those indignities a pass.)

Needless to say, after much derring-do, our heroes won the day, and how Sinestro came to control Goitrude finally was revealed. Hal, you see, had defeated his arch-foe way back in *GL* #18 (Jan 63) and imprisoned him in an amber cube. And then, to keep the cube safe and the personification of evil from ever breaking free, Hal stored the invisible cube for safekeeping in his garage.

That's right, his garage. Green Lantern

AGAIN AND AGAIN, THE METROPOLIS MARVEL HURLS ALL HIS MIGHT AT THE GROUND BENEATH HIM... AND HIS MUSCLES STRAIN TO THE UTMOST...
I'VE FUSED THE GROUND SOLID WITH MY HEAT VISION SO I HAVE A FIRM SURFACE TO PUSH AGAINST... NOW ALL I HAVE TO DO IS STOP THE WORLD!

took his arch-foe, who personified evil, and dumped him in his garage! It was the work of only a bit of time (well, actually, 34 issues) before Sinestro figured out how to tap into the power of Goitrude's phenomenally charged-up battery and transfer his mind into Goitrude's um, ah, something or other automotive that controlled all of Goitrude's systems and filled its gas tank. The transmission? The pistons? The butterfly valve? Let's not linger here.

In fact, let's not linger anywhere *near* here, except maybe to ogle that Gil Kane art. Here's your prized Mopee Award, gents, for those great ideas about storing Sinestro and figuring Doiby could charm a Model T into giving up its life of crime. Just do us all a favor and store this prized statue somewhere besides your garage!

5. The **"Let Me Destroy Mankind or I'll Beat You with My Wings!" Award** goes to "The New Iron Man 'Meets The Angel'!" (by special arrangement with the editors of the *X-Men* magazine) in *Tales of Suspense* #49 (Jan 64).

The X-Men did not exactly roar out of the gate, when their title was introduced. So any visibility they could gain would be a help. Thus, Stan had the brilliant idea of tying the Marvel universe a little closer together by having an X-member guest-star with Iron Man in *ToS*, just as *X-Men* #3 was hitting the stands. Needless to say, since this was a Marvel comic, by "guest-star with," I mean "fight." Sadly, the member of The X-Men that faced off against Iron Man was The Angel.

Let's see, a guy who can fly and has a suit of armor that is powered by some kind of magical transistors that can pretty well blow apart the moon (at least when they're charged, which admittedly is never) is going to fight a guy who can fly and — well — a guy who can fly. Place your bets! And here's the amazing part: The Angel won just enough rounds in this clash of the titans to make the story last a full 18 pages! You may have to turn off your brain to agree that it makes perfect sense, but we're used to that by now, aren't we?

Angel's motivation to fight came from a nuclear explosion that he accidentally flew into, which turned him evil. Yeah, that'd probably make me irritated with the human

Attain ramming speed! To stop the Earth in its orbital tracks, The Man of Steel slammed into it really, really hard in* Superman *#220.

Mopee Awards!

race, too. Iron Man tried to warn Angel away, but it was too late, and then, when he tried to catch up to Angel to ensure he was all right — darn! Iron Man's jets lost their power! What are the chances of that happening? Actually, if you've read any Silver Age Iron Man stories, you know they're pretty darn good.

Angel returned to the X-Mansion and informed his former friends that he was joining The Brotherhood of Evil Mutants, because he now thought humans were a bunch of doo-doo heads. (I'm paraphrasing here.) He quickly defeated the rest of the team and flew off to find his new pals so they could all destroy mankind together. Let's not think about how plausible Angel defeating all of The X-Men really is, either. The X-team contacted The Avengers for help, but all except Iron Man were busy. Well, Hank and Jan were out dancing, if that counts — and, when the danger is that Angel is throwing a tantrum, it probably does.

After Angel blew off some dynamite to attract The Brotherhood (it oddly didn't work), Iron Man grabbed him. But Angel broke away from Iron Man's powerful transistorized grip. Angel then sneakily trapped IM in a warehouse, soundly defeating him. But our hero pulled the door off its hinges, putting a tremendous strain on his now-weakened transistors. Oh, boy. The Golden Avenger grabbed Angel and rocketed into the sky, but just then — darn! Iron Man's jets lost their power! What are the chances of my repeating what I wrote only two paragraphs ago, when this last happened? Actually, if you've read many *Ask Mr. Silver Age* columns, you know they're pretty darn good.

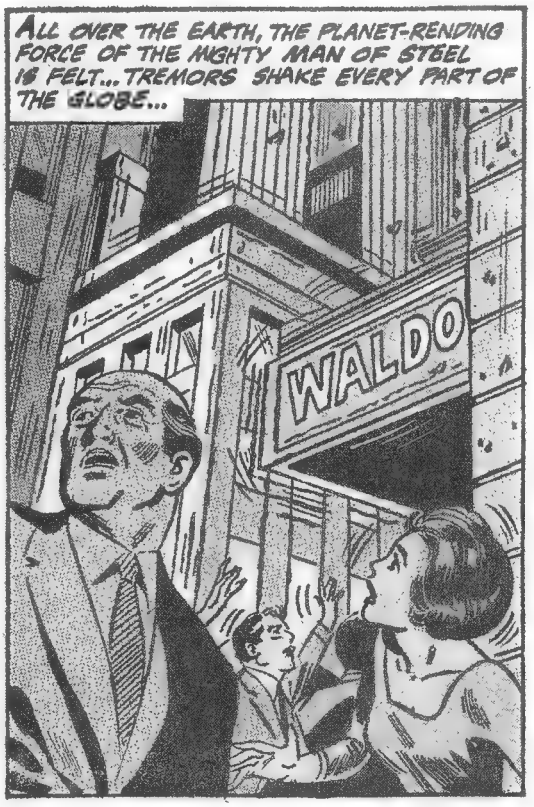
The Angel regained his sunny personality just in time to save Iron Man from crashing to the ground, and everyone forgave everyone else. IM flew off to ponder why his transistors hadn't made him as powerful as he'd thought, ideally learning that transistors don't really produce a heckuva lot of power except when hooked up to Marvel science.

Here's your Mopee award, Iron Man, for managing to be just weak enough at the coincidentally best times to make Angel look like Wolverine! You can admire it while you spend all that time recharging those pitiful transistors!

Citizens (and animals, plants, and buildings) all over the Earth felt a slight tremor as they stopped moving at 67,000 miles per hour and came to a dead stop in* Superman *#220.

6. The "**My Best Power Is Making Sir Isaac Newton Spin in His Grave!" Award** to "Who Stole My Super-Powers?" in *Superman #220* (Oct 69).

Once again, we have a story that has long been one of my favorites, as I consider it a classic example of why DC's team-ups had a different appeal from those at Marvel. But it still deserves a Mopee for also being a classic example of the trouble you get when you try to think too much about Superman's powers.



The gist of the story was that The Flash and Superman both awoke in strange places (a deserted island and a cowfield), with amnesia — and wearing each other's costumes. They spent the better part of the issue figuring out what was going on and learning that it was difficult to be someone you're not in both their civilian and super identities.

The first oddity is that the story actually has no official title; the name I gave it appeared on the cover and in the header for Part Two. The splash page simply says, "Reader, there is something dead wrong here ..." and then an arrow pointing to Superman says, "Hint: This man is *not* Superman!" Quite a few comics stories weren't tied down to actually providing titles, but that practice had mostly disappeared by the 1960s. Not this time.

The Mopee part of the story takes place at the very end, as everything is worked out. Having recovered their memories, our heroes remembered that they had been in the midst of (in a nutshell) trying to stop a deadly missile from hitting Earth and killing all life. Superman discovered that the missile would hit Earth in a half-hour — too little time to summon The Justice League of America to help out! Say what? On top of that, attacking the missile directly wouldn't work, since that's what got them into trouble in the first place.

So the heroes devised a cunning plan. Zooming down to Brazil, Flash checked to

ensure no people were within a hundred miles of their site, while Superman fused the ground solid with his heat vision to create a hard surface. Then, The Man of Steel slammed into the ground so hard, over and over, that he *stopped the Earth in its orbit!* And, with our planet no longer revolving around the sun, the missile shot past, missing Earth entirely and ending up in the sun. Yay!

It's a swell plan, except for two minor concerns. First, just how fast would a 6-foot, 3-inch, 225-pound guy have to be moving in order to stop a planet that has a diameter of 7,926 miles, a mass of about 6 sextillion metric tons (technically, 5,972,000,000,000,000,000,000 metric tons) and a speed of about 67,000 miles per hour? I'm sure Sir Isaac Newton would agree that he probably had to be really motoring. That would take quite a long run-up and so much acceleration I don't even want to think about how Superman could make that work.

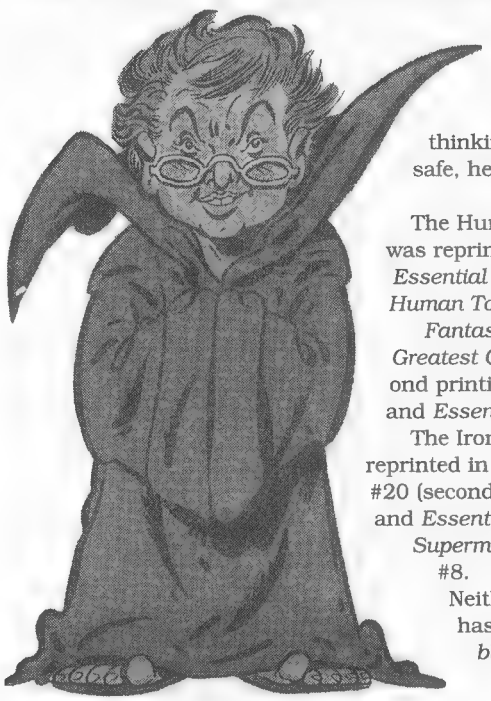
In fact, the only explanation is that he was moving *so* fast that he moved right into a parallel universe where physics follows another set of rules altogether. And I'm thinking that the person who devised the physical laws they follow in that universe must've been Mopee. And, frankly, it doesn't really matter how much ground Supes fused "solid," I'm guessing it would give way when a big hunk of dirt the size of Earth hurtling through space was hit by a guy Superman's size moving darn fast in the other direction.

That still leaves us with a slight problem. Namely: What exactly happens to all the people, animals, plants, and buildings on Earth, when their cosmic vehicle suddenly comes to a dead stop after moving at 67,000 miles per hour? Based on what I remember from driver's ed, I'm guessing that quite a few of them blow through the proverbial windshield of the universe that we call the atmosphere and keep right on going until they smack upside that proverbial telephone pole known as the vacuum of space. And that's got to leave a mark.

Fortunately, that didn't happen, since we're following Mopee's Laws of Motion, which usually are in place when we consider Superman's flying ability. Instead, we're told that, all over the planet, everyone feels a little tremor. No big deal! Then, in the briefest of captions, we have another notion that I'm sorry we didn't get to see put into action: "And so, after Earth has been restored to its rightful motion ..." I don't even want to guess how Supes managed to kickstart Earth to its "rightful" speed and direction to achieve the proper rotation and revolution — or what device he used to measured those.

Here's your Mopee Award for having powers and abilities far beyond anything science would ever want to go near, Supes! You'd better put it someplace safe, because it might slip off the mantel the next time you have to stop the Earth dead in its tracks!

Avoid these comics!



Worried that you might accidentally pick up a comic book and come face to face with one of these gems in reprint form? Well, technically, a few of these stories are pretty cool, if you can just avoid thinking about them too hard. But, just to be safe, here's where these tales have been reprinted:

The Human Torch story from *Strange Tales* #107 was reprinted in *Human Torch* #7, *Marvel Tales* #9, *Essential Human Torch* #1, and *Marvel Masterworks: Human Torch* #1.

Fantastic Four #40 was reprinted in *Marvel's Greatest Comics* #31, *Marvel Masterworks* #21 (second printing: *Marvel Masterworks: Fantastic Four* #4), and *Essential Fantastic Four* #2.

The Iron Man tale from *Tales of Suspense* #49 was reprinted in *Giant-Size Iron Man* #1, *Marvel Masterworks* #20 (second printing: *Marvel Masterworks: Iron Man* #1), and *Essential Iron Man* #1.

Superman #220 was reprinted in *Best of DC Digest* #8.

Neither *The Flash* #171 nor *Green Lantern* #52 has been reprinted, as far as I know. *Sacré bleu!*

Mr. Silver Age's Mailchute ...

Super-Lois revealed!

DC
OCT. NO.137
TEN CENTS
52 PAGES
ACTION COMICS
Hold on, SUPERMAN! LOOKS LIKE Trick IS A JOB FOR LOIS LANE!
YOU WROTE SOME STORIES ABOUT US GUYS- HERE'S YOUR PAY, IN LEAD!
WHAT'S THE MATTER? OUR BULLETS DON'T HURT HER! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

Despite its cover, **Action Comics** *#137 did not feature a Super-Lois story, only a couple panels of super-doing that were a hoax.*

Crooks tried to convince Lois and an eyewitness that they had super-powers in **Action** *#137.*

by **CRAIG SHUTT**

Dear Mr. Silver Age: I enjoyed your article on Super-Lois (in ***CBG*** #1618). I have a copy of *Action Comics* #137 [(Oct 49), which had been questioned as possibly containing a Super-Lois tale], and there's no Super-Lois in that story.

The plot involved the efforts of a mobster to convince a clerk who was to testify against him that the clerk had found the "lost ring of Thoth," which would protect the wearer against "mortal death." The mobster rigged the first couple of saves, hoping the clerk would continue trying to thwart death and kill himself, so he couldn't testify.

Superman kept saving the clerk before he died in various daredevil stunts. At one point, the clerk gave Lois the ring for a few minutes, which the mobster and his gang saw. They shot at Lois with blanks to show the ring worked on her, too. Superman eventually got the mobster to admit that the ring had no powers. So you were right, the Lois scene was just for the cover.

Richard Mrozek
rjm3677@prodigy.net

(Thanks for the info, Richard! I had a feeling that might be the case, based on the other information I could find about the issue. Pulling out that little detail as the cover makes it apparent that Super-Lois had pretty strong appeal as a concept. Given that, it's surprising they didn't use the idea more often before the Silver Age — when they put it to pretty regular use. — MSA)

Dear Mr. Silver Age: I really enjoyed your article on the frequent appearances of Lois with super-powers. In fact, I bought *Lois Lane* #21 years ago because it showed Lana and Lois having a super-cat fight on the cover.

YOU'LL WHAT, YOU POISONOUS LITTLE CRUD?
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO TO SOMEONE WHO DOESN'T GIVE A DAMN ABOUT KRYPTONITE?
BRAINIAC! HELP ME!

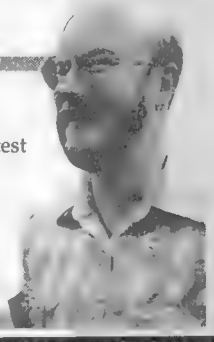
Superman was flying to get between them, symbolizing his getting caught in the middle.

This issue bought back memories of another appearance of Super-Lana, in Alan Moore's Imaginary Story in *Superman* #423 and *Action* #583 (Sep 86). To help save Superman, she became Super-Lana again. Lana killed Luthor after he begged her to kill him to stop Brainiac from controlling his body. Both Lana and Jimmy died as heroes in the process. Although the comics are not in the Silver Age, the concept of risking your life to save someone else's life is definitely a Silver Age idea.

William McGee Jr.
billmcgee2@prodigy.net

(Alan Moore's story was a genuine classic, Bill, and I was truly surprised to see that he remembered Lana's super-costume from its several Silver Age appearances. Those Super-Lois and Super-Lana stories made quite an impact on fans, I guess, as can also be seen in ***All-Star Superman****, which quickly pulled the Super-Lois rabbit out of its hat. In fact, seeing the preview for that issue inspired me to dig out all those Super-Lois stories from the past. Since Lana had been hanging around since Superboy's time, she had even more opportunities to try out super-powers, so it was fitting she got that last bow. It wouldn't take much convincing for me to dive back in to put together a Super-Lana column. — MSA)*

Super-Lana made her final appearance (to date) in* Action Comics *#583, wearing her traditional costume.



Known to fans worldwide as "Mr. Silver Age," **CRAIG SHUTT** has waxed nostalgic about comics of old in CBG since 1992. His latest book, ***Baby Boomer Comics***, is available from F+W Publications at (800) 258-0529, offer CBHCS. Got a question about the Silver Age? Drop him a line at **craigshutt@ameritech.net!**

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Our reviewers didn't always agree even way back when!

RETRO OBLIGATORY FIGHT SCENE!

Amazing Spider-Man #121-122 (Jun-Jul 73)

Marvel

20¢@, color, 32 pgs.@, available now

Writer: Gerry Conway; Artist: Gil Kane

Discussed by **"Junior" Jim Johnson and "Pre-teen" John Petty**

MARVEL COMICS GROUP
20¢ 121
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN
SOMEONE CALL FOR HELP!
SOMEONE CAUSE TO DIE!
I CANNOT SAVE!
MY SPIDER SENSE IS NEVER WRONG!
BUT WHO? WHO?
NOT A TRICK! NOT AN IMAGINARY TALE! BUT THE MOST STARTLING STORY EVER COLLECTED!
TURNING POINT
SUDDENLY SPIDER-VILLAINS!

Jim Johnson: Oh my gosh! You are not going to believe what just happened in *Amazing Spider-Man*! The Green Goblin kills Gwen Stacy to get back at Peter! And then The Goblin gets killed fighting Spider-Man! These are the coolest comics I've read since "The Kree-Skrull War" in *The Avengers*! I can't believe Marvel did this! They killed a major character! This has never happened before! You talk about it for a while, I've gotta go read it again; I'm running out of breath! And exclamation points!

John Petty: You're getting all excited over nothing. This is gonna be just like all those imaginary stories DC always does, like when Superman marries Lois Lane. You know that's never going to happen, either. Marvel wouldn't really kill off Gwen. I'll bet you anything she's back in a couple of issues, maybe hypnotized to be The Goblin's girlfriend or something. No, that's too dumb. Anyway, she'll be back. This is comics. Nobody really dies. Except Bucky. He's really, really dead.

Johnson: Hey, this isn't some hoax, dream, or Imaginary Story. Marvel's too cool to try something stupid like that. The only way you'll ever see Gwen again is if they clone her or something. And I think Marvel's too cool for that, too. Nope, Gwen's really dead. Dee-ee-ay-dee, dead. It's kind of sad, but it's also the kind of story that I'm not embarrassed to show to my parents. This should prove to them once and for all that we're not throwing our allowances away on junk. I'm kind of bummed that The Green Goblin's dead, too, though. Maybe they can have Harry take his dad's place someday. Oh, wait; you probably think that Norman will be back, too. Well, if you do, you're stupid.

Petty: Moron. I bet you believed it when Peter Parker gave up being Spider-Man, too … and then came back. Or when Professor X died … and then came back. Or all the times Doctor Doom died in *Fantastic Four* … and then came back. You'll see, Gwen's going to be fine, and then you're gonna feel like a real dumbhead. Marvel isn't as stupid as you are. They know what they're doing, and Stan "The Man" isn't a killer. Besides, who would be Peter's girlfriend, that ditzy bimbo Mary Jane? I don't think so. She's almost as big a doofus as you. I'll bet if someone told

NO DOUBT MY WALL-CRAWLING FOE EXPECTS TO AMBUSH ME.
IF SO, HE'S A GREATER FOOL THAN I'VE IMAGINED!
FOR, WHILE HE GUARDS THE FRONT--
I SHALL EXIT THROUGH THE REAR--
--AND TAKE HIM FROM THE SIDE!
WRONG, GOBLIN!
WHUMP!
TONIGHT IT'S MY GAME--
--AND WE PLAY BY MY RULES!

vel's bestselling book, you'd believe that, too. Lamebrain.

Johnson: You're the lamebrain, poo-poo breath. I'll bet you your bike, your dog, and a million billion dollars that Gwen will never be back. And that *Playboy* under your bed, too. This isn't the same as Professor X or Doctor Doom; Gwen's, like, a real person. You see comics all the time where a regular guy or girl gets captured, but the hero always saves the day — until now. It made Spidey more like a real person, too, because it showed he couldn't save someone close to him. If they bring Gwen back, then they take away from this story's meaning. So there. You're wrong. Nyah nyah. Now pay up, dork face.

Petty: Not so fast, dipwad. Gwen'll be back before you can say "Wallopin' Websnappers," and that'll be the ultimate Spider-Man story! And if you think Gwen's a "real person," you need serious help. This is just setting Spidey when he almost didn't get Aunt May her medicine in time but then he did and it was even better than if he had done it the first time. This "Gwen" is gonna end up being a Skrull or something, you'll see. Good guys don't die in comics, unless it's an origin story, like when Uncle Ben was killed. Jeez, next you'll say Marvel oughta make a hero who punishes bad guys by killing 'em. Don't be stupid. And there is no *Playboy* under my bed. Jerk.

Johnson: You knucklehead, that's 'cuz I took it. Along with your copies of *Amazing Spider-Man*. They're gonna be worth something.

Cuter than Tarzan's Jane

Atlas' Jann of the Jungle

by Michelle Nolan

The Jane of Tarzan lore wasn't the only Jane on the potted-palm pop-culture circuit. The other Jane, though, lasted only a few panels in her first comic-book story — until African natives gave her the name Jann. She quickly emerged as Jann of the Jungle and was one of the last of the original jungle queens in the pre-politically correct era.

Atlas — as the Timely-Marvel comic-book empire was popularly known for its huge 1951 to 1957 comic-book output with the little globe in the upper-left corner of the cover — had long been acknowledged for its legion of knockoff characters in a variety of genres. By the time Jann first swung into action, in a plot-packed six-page epic in *Jungle Tales* #1 (Sep 54), Martin Goodman's legendary firm was pretty much reduced to copying its own successful *Lorna the Jungle Girl*. *Lorna* #9 appeared the same month.

When Jann made her debut in 1954 — in a stylish, low-cut costume and with what was to become her trademark perfect makeup, curled eyelashes and all — she filled a Jungle Girl gap. Almost all female versions of the "big swingers" were only a recent memory in comics, although low-budget Charlton made a minor contribution in 1954 by reviving Fawcett's long-running Nyoka in reprints shortly after Jann first appeared.

A JACKAL PACK RUNNING TOWARD A COMMON DESTINATION! SOME CREATURE IS ABOUT TO DIE! MAYBE IT'S NOT TOO LATE! MAYBE I CAN STILL DO SOMETHING TO HELP!
LISTEN, JANN! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE HELPING ME! REMEMBER? NOW HOLD THAT REFLECTOR STRAIGHT!
LIONS, RHINOS, JAGUARS... THESE ARE AMONG THE BRAVE BEASTS OF THE JUNGLE! BUT THERE ARE OTHER CREATURES, THE MARAUDERS, THE SLY AND WILY THIEVES, THE COWARDLY THINGS THAT DARE NOT BRAVE THE DANGERS OF THE CONSTANT STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL! JANN OF THE JUNGLE CANNOT TURN AWAY WHEN SHE SEES THE DANGER IN...
"THE JACKAL'S LAIR!"
H691

Sheena (always the most popular jungle girl) and Tiger Girl led several Fiction House femmes through the trees before swinging their last by mid-1953. Nyoka was temporarily sidelined at the same time as Fawcett began cutting its entire line. Fox dispensed with its multitude of monkey business by 1950, and lesser-known Star Publications vanished in 1954. Other than the ever-popular Tarzan, most of the mid-1950s jungle heroes were guys like Jungle Jim (in a variety of media including a popular Dell comics series), Ramar of the Jungle (best-known on TV), and Bomba the Jungle Boy (primarily in series books and, later, movies).

Jann of the Jungle #8 Nov 1955 ★★★

Writer: Don Rico
Pencils: Jay Pike, Syd Shores, Don Heck
Inks: Shores, Heck, Pike
Cover: Uncredited

"Jungle Outlaw!" (Jann) • 6 pp.

Jann foils a "desperate Red agent" who has located "the world's richest uranium mine" after drugging her faithful gorilla Congo.

When Jann breaks up a fight between two gorillas in the first panel of the first story in the new title devoted to her, you know you're in for a fantastic adventure.

"The Pool of Doom!" (Waku) • 6 pp.

"The Hunter and the Hunted!" (Unknown Jungle) • 5 pp.

"Most Dangerous Game!" (Cliff Mason) • 6 pp.

Best CGC copy: 8.0

Then 10¢ NOW $125

Jann of the Jungle #9 Jan 1956 ★★½

Writer: Don Rico
Pencils: Jay Pike, Syd Shores, Don Heck
Inks: Pike, Shores, Heck
Cover: Uncredited

"Lost River!" (Jann) • 5 pp.

"There's only one way to get out of a croc's pool fast! That's to hang onto his tail and let him lash it around to get you off it!"

After dispensing this handy advice to would-be safari-goers, Jann rescues photographer Pat Murphy from lions that may or may not be ghosts.

"With Fang and Talons!" (Jann) • 5 pp.

"The Haunted Swamp!" (Cliff Mason) • 6 pp.

"The Judgment of the Beasts!" (Unknown Jungle) • 4 pp.

"Sudden Fury!" (Jann) • 5 pp.

No CGC copies

Then 10¢ NOW $100

© Marvel

Atlas, though, came along with both *Lorna* and *Jann* in time to capitalize nicely on the brief popularity of the 1955-56 syndicated TV series *Sheena*, in which the voluptuous Irish McCalla cavorted through 26 syndicated episodes of the "so bad they're good" type. Although the fondly remembered Sheena had been gone from comics since 1953, Jann and Lorna were the best original Jungle Girls that comics had to offer until the 1957 Atlas implosion proved deadlier than all the wicked white hunters in the jungle.

It's not well known, but Lorna and Jann apparently were two of Atlas' better-selling characters until the implosion. Other than the company's well-established heroines of humor, Lorna's 26-issue run at the time of the implosion was exceeded only by four active Atlas character-driven comics — *Kid Colt, Two-Gun Kid, Combat Kelly*, and *Combat Casey*.

Jann appeared in 17 consecutive issues — *Jungle Tales* #1-7 and *Jann of the Jungle* #8-17. Beginning with *Jann* #9 (Jan 56), she appeared in three stories in every issue. The stories (except one reprint) were only five pages, but they packed enough plot for tales twice that long. In the first eight issues, including *Jann of the Jungle* #8, she appeared in one six-page story along with three other regular features.

Since *Lorna* already had reached #9 (Sep 54) when *Jungle Tales* #1 appeared concurrently on the stands, one can only assume that reports of *Lorna*'s sales were good. A third Atlas jungle title, *Jungle Action*, began in October 1954 and featured the oddly full-body-costumed Leopard Girl. That title last only six issues, and Leopard Girl was quickly forgotten.

Joe Maneely drew Jann as a Sheena-like blonde with an orange swimsuit-like costume on the cover of *Jungle Tales* #1, and the blonde image mysteriously continued on the cover of #2. But right from the start inside, the stylish artist Jay Scott Pike portrayed Jann in a sharply tailored low-cut blue outfit. She looked more as if she were ready for a pool party than anything else.

Indeed, the story in *Jungle Tales* #1 introduced us to Jane Hastings and quickly let the reader know why she was fully qualified to become Jann. She's a former circus trapeze artist and animal trainer who is now a gorgeous

Jann of the Jungle #10 Mar 1956 ★★★

Writer: Don Rico
Pencils: Jay Pike, Don Heck, Syd Shores
Inks: Pike, Heck, Shores
Cover: Al Williamson, Vince Colletta

"The Jackal's Lair!" (Jann) • 5 pp.

Jann cuts the poison venom out of a mysterious monster in a pool, and jackals pay the price for their instinctive greed.

Jann charitably shows her respect for all creatures in the animal world, when she lets the mystery monster live, once its "poison fang" is no longer a threat.

"The Pearls of Peril!" (Jann) • 5 pp.

"The Marauder!" (Cliff Mason) • 4 pp.

"Jungle Odds!" (Unknown Jungle) • 4 pp.

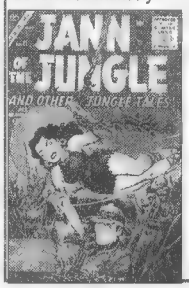
"Revenge of the Totem!" (Jann) • 5 pp.

Best CGC copy: 7.0

Then 10c NOW $100

Jann of the Jungle #11 May 1956 ★★★

Writer: Don Rico
Pencils: Jay Pike, Don Heck, Syd Shores
Inks: Pike, Heck, Shores
Cover: Joe Maneely



"Jungle Night!" (Jann) • 5 pp.

Pat Murphy gets the "best picture I've ever taken," when Jann uses "jungle serum" to cure a female gorilla and win over her male partner.

Tears of joy coming from a male gorilla? This series offered some of the most fantastic plots available in post-Comics Code stories of the mid-1950s.

"Tribal Warfare!" (Jann) • 5 pp.

"Prize Trophy!" (Cliff Mason) • 4 pp.

"A Time of Hazard!" (Unknown Jungle) • 4 pp.

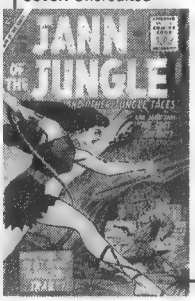
"The Bottomless Pit!" (Jann) • 5 pp.

No CGC copies

Then 10c NOW $85

Jann of the Jungle #12 Jul 1956 ★★★

Writer: Don Rico
Pencils: Jay Pike, Don Heck, Syd Shores
Inks: Pike, Heck, Shores
Cover: Uncredited



"Revolt of the Tribes!" (Jann) • 5 pp.

Jann defeats the evil Kabubi, who doesn't want to fight her because she is a woman, then finds a way to convince the tribesmen to help her after she saves them from "the poison of hatred."

In retrospect, it's a sad commentary on the early version of the Comics Code that it allowed a degree of racist stereotypes but wouldn't allow cleavage to show on Jann!

"The Lost Safari!" (Jann) • 5 pp

"The Swamp Peril!" (Cliff Mason) • 4 pp.

"Fang vs. Fury!" (Unknown Jungle) • 4 pp.

No CGC copies

Then 10c NOW $85

Jann of the Jungle #13 Sep 1956 ★★

Writer: Don Rico
Pencils: Jay Pike, Don Heck, Syd Shores
Inks: Pike, Heck, Shores
Cover: Joe Maneely

Untitled Jann story • 5 pp.

When photographer Pat Murphy insists his job is "to take pictures of everything in Africa," Jann ties him to a tree.

Jann has to rescue Pat from a jungle fire after she forgets she has left him helpless. But Pat takes it all in stride, when Jann rescues him in one of the most nonsensical stories of the series.

"When the Trap Closed!" (Jann) • 5 pp.

Untitled Cliff Mason story • 4 pp.

"Taboo!" (Unknown Jungle) • 4 pp.

Untitled Jann story • 5 pp.

Best CGC copy: 8.5

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and highly athletic stunt woman doing dramatic work on location in Africa. Friendly film-maker Pat Mahoney, soon to become Jann's pesky companion as an ambitious (if forgetful) photographer, isn't happy with how the snippy star, Eva Dawn, treats Jane. "You take all the chances, Jane, and she's the star!" Pat says in frustration, as Eva kisses the hero of this potted-palm epic. "If she didn't have you as her double and stunt girl, Eva Dawn would be back slinging hash!"

At that point, admiring natives call Jane aside and insist that she really *is* a Jungle Girl — known as Jann. She doesn't have time to explain herself to Pat, though. She is forced to turn her attention to stopping a stampede of thirst-maddened animals and killing a huge snake. Jane then reveals how the natives actually remember her grandmother Jann, the original Jungle Girl. (Shades of The Phantom!) When the film crew leaves, Jane decides to stay on as Jann to help the natives. Pat decides to stay, too, because, "Somebody's got to watch over the new Jann!"

All this in six action-packed pages!

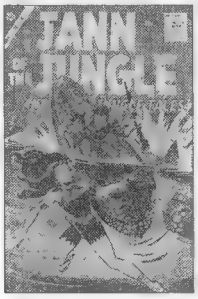
A little more than a year later, Stan Lee and the good folks at Atlas decided to devote most of the issue to Jann and retitled it *Jann of the Jungle* with #8 (Nov 55). That issue had the same format as *Jungle Tales*, but, beginning with #9 and running through #17 (Jun 57), there were always three five-page Jann stories and two holdover features — the oddly named "Cliff Mason, White Hunter" and the animal epic "The Unknown Jungle." The only exception was #16 (Apr 57), which reprinted the six-page Jann story from #8.

In all, Jann appeared in 34 original stories, none more than six pages. She battled every jungle cliché of the era: evil hunters, wild animals, cruel witch doctors, renegade Reds, and not a few mythical creatures. The Comics Code eliminated the low-cut outfit beginning with *Jungle Tales* #4 (Mar 1955). For some reason, however, the Comics Code always allowed Jann to be drawn with one of the largest busts in all of comics. Jann's costumes always looked as if they'd come right off the rack at Nordstrom in the department devoted to what the well-dressed Jungle Girl should wear. Likewise, her face was always perfect. In the African jungles, the fact that Jann's makeup never ran or smudged was her most fantastic feat!

YES! YOU KNOW WHAT LOVE IS, DON'T YOU?
SURE I DO! IT'S WHAT I FEEL FOR MY CAMERA WHEN I TAKE A GOOD PICTURE, AND... GREAT SCOTT!
I FORGOT TO TAKE IT ALONG AND MISSED THE BEST SHOTS OF MY LIFE!
THAT'S ALL YOU CAN THINK OF, YOUR CAMERA! I GIVE UP!

Jann of the Jungle #14 Nov 1956 ★★★

Writer: Don Rico
Pencils: Jay Pike, Don Heck, Syd Shores
Inks: Pike, Heck, Shores
Cover: Uncredited



"Double Danger!" (Jann) • 5 pp.

An athletic double for Jann tries to start a war between two tribes — until Jann convinces the natives to get at the root of the problem.

"I saw one thing … blonde roots in her hair!" It's hard to fool a Jungle Girl who knows herb dye when she sees it on a befuddled rival. This unexpected ending is clever.

"The Day of Jungle Wrath!" (Jann) • 5 pp.

"Alarm in the Jungle!" (Cliff Mason) • 4 pp.

"Striped Fury!" (Unknown Jungle) • 4 pp.

"When the Volcano Roared!" (Jann) • 5 pp.

No CGC copies

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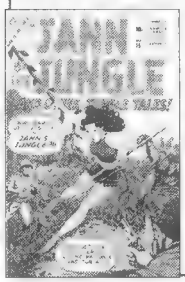
Jann of the Jungle #15 Feb 1957 ★★★

Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Jay Pike, Don Heck, Syd Shores
Inks: Pike, Heck, Shores
Cover: Bill Everett



"The Way of the Outcasts!" (Jann) • 5 pp.

Jann uses the giant elephant Balbo to foil a hunter who seeks revenge, when Jane's work uncovers his illegal activities.

Talk about unrealistic endings: Balbo's trunk saves the baddies from death (pretty much forbidden by the Comics Code), when the elephant stops a Jeep from going over a cliff.

"When the Big Rains Came!" (Jann) • 5 pp.

"Last Bullet!" (Cliff Mason) • 4 pp.

"The Greatest Fear!" (Unknown Jungle) • 4 pp.

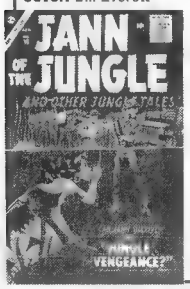
"Revenge of the Totem!" (Jann) • 5 pp.

Best CGC copy: 8.5

Then 10¢ NOW $85

Jann of the Jungle #16 Apr 1957 ★★★

Writer: Don Rico
Pencils: Al Williamson, Don Heck, Syd Shores
Inks: Mayo, Heck, Shores
Cover: Bill Everett



"Cry Danger!" (Jann) • 5 pp.

Jann helps a cowardly hunter regain his courage during an attack by a wild gorilla — but never tells the hunter of her role.

"B'wana was once my boss-man and now we can go back to being hunters again!" is Jann's reward from a grateful African native — who never loses his courage.

"Jungle Outlaw!" (Jann) • 6 pp. (#8 reprint)

"Midnight Marauder!" (Cliff Mason) • 4 pp.

"Menace of the Swamps!" (Unknown Jungle) • 4 pp.

"Fangs of the Black Orchid!" (Jann) • 5 pp.

Best CGC copy: 8.5

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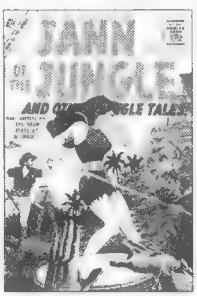
Jann of the Jungle #17 Jun 1957 ★★★

Writer: Don Rico
Pencils: Al Williamson, Don Heck, Syd Shores
Inks: Mayo, Heck, Shores
Cover: Bill Everett



"Voodoo Vengeance!" (Jann) • 5 pp.

"I've been voodooed!" is Jann's reaction, when she finds herself temporarily unable to perform her usual feats of derring-do.

In a twist on the usual voodoo story, the voodoo doctor turns out to be a good guy from Jann's viewpoint.

"The Killers of the Swamps!" (Jann) • 5 pp.

"Trail of the Ten-Toed Thing!" (Cliff Mason) • 4 pp.

"Marauder in the Lair!" (Unknown Jungle) • 4 pp.

"The Drum Beats at Midnight!" (Jann) • 5 pp.

"Earning His Way" • 2 text pp.

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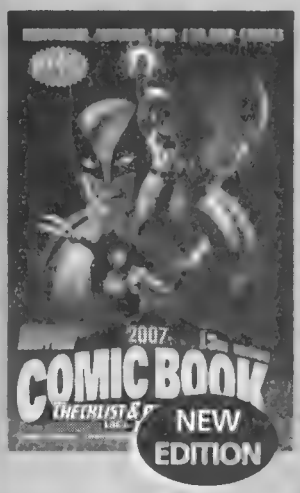

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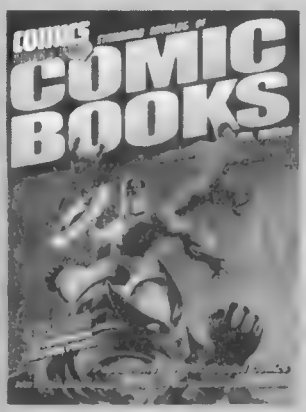

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This section features listings for retail comics stores around the U.S. arranged by state. Traveling comics collectors of all types search for new stores to dig through on their vacations, business trips, etc. (be sure you mention that you saw it in CBG!) Advertise your establishment here, include your name, contact person (this will not appear in the listing), address, city, state, zip, phone, fax, if you carry CBG in your store and approximately 10 words (or less) of miscellaneous description, for only $276.00 for 12 consecutive issues. Mail to: Comics Buyer's Guide, 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54990.

Retailers listed in bold sell Comics Buyer's Guide in their stores. For information on how you can sell Comics Buyer's Guide in your store contact your Comics Distributor or our Bulk Sales Department at 715-445-2214.

Dan DiDio

10 FAVORITE COMIC BOOK COVERS

The DC universe's Executive Editor makes his picks

As shown by his choices on the next three pages, DC Senior Vice President/Executive Editor of the DC Universe Dan DiDio has been a longtime comics fan.

DiDio's love of comics shaped his career path to some extent. Before coming to DC in January of 2002, DiDio worked in television and computer animation for such companies as CBS and Mainframe Entertainment.

On the television side of things, his work included development of everything from daytime dramas to children's programming.

In addition, he's worked as a story editor, scriptwriter, public-relations manager, and as a vice president of creative affairs at Mainframe.

Programs he's been associated with include *Tales from the Crypt*, *ABC Afterschool Specials*, *Hypernauts*, and *Weird-Ohs*.

In an interview with our own Captain Comics in ***CBG*** #1614 (March 2006), DiDio said that *Avengers* #100 (one of his picks on this list) was "the one that made me a person who wanted to buy and read more."

Amazing Spider-Man #40 © 1966 Marvel Characters Inc.; art by John Romita

***Amazing Spider-Man* #40 (Sep 66).** *"One of the first comics I ever bought. It's the one cover that always stood out in my mind as one of the few times Spider-Man wins on the cover. It showed me the real power of Spider-Man."*

Orig. price: 12¢ Current NM price: $3.25

Batman #181 © 1966 DC; art by Carmine Infantino

***Batman* #181 (Jun 66).** *"My first big-crush issue — big full-spread of Poison Ivy on the cover. For a young boy, there was something really exciting about that cover and I didn't know what it was until later on in life."*

Orig. price: 12¢ Current NM price: $175

Top 10 sponsored by: MASTRO AUCTIONS

House of Mystery #191 © 1971 DC; cover by Neal Adams

***House of Mystery* #191 (Apr 71).** *"Nothing says, 'Buy me,' more than a little child's story with a knife threatening a kid over a dead body. Incredibly powerful cover."*

Orig. price: 15¢ Current NM price: $20

Metal Men #16 © 1965 DC; art by Ross Andru and Mike Esposito

***Metal Men* #20 (Jul 66).** *"The birthday cake cover — there was something so fascinating as a kid about that cover, that it just pulled me right to it."*

Orig. price: 12¢ Current NM price: $55

From Beyond the Unknown #10 © 1971 DC; cover by Murphy Anderson

***From Beyond the Unknown* #10 (May 71).** *"Sixty-four pages to stagger the imagination. This was the one that pulled me into the science-fiction world."*

Orig. price: 25¢ Current NM price: $12

Incredible Hulk #152 © 1972 Marvel Characters Inc.; art byHerb Trimpe

***Incredible Hulk* #152 (Jun 72).** *"A whole bunch of characters on the cover, and I thought I was getting a real bargain."*

Orig. price: 20¢ Current NM price: $20

Top 10 sponsored by: MASTRO AUCTIONS

Avengers #100 © 1972 Marvel Characters Inc.; cover by Barry Windsor Smith

Avengers #100 (Jun 72). *"There was a great array of characters. I was never fully exposed to the Marvel world until that point."*

Orig. price: 20¢ Current NM price: $55

DC superboy
SUPERBOY
NO. 186
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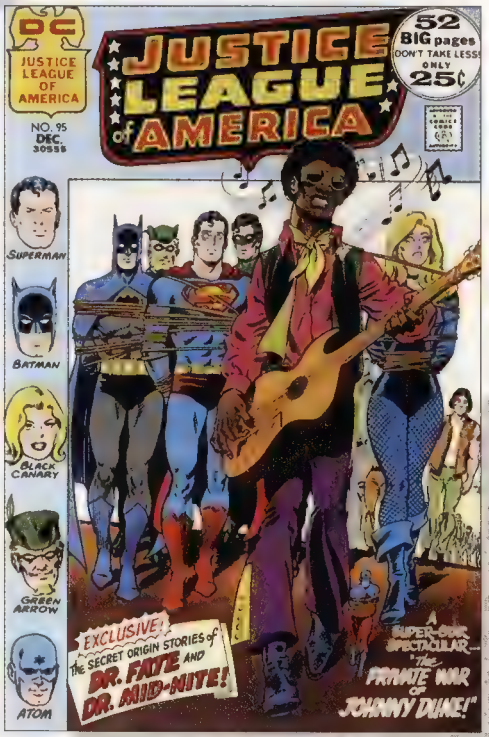
"MUTINY OF THE DAMNED"

Superboy #186 © 1972 DC; cover by Nick Cardy

***Superboy* #186 (May 72).** *"The one comic that my aunt bought me, it got me into DC comics. I always thanked her for getting me into comics with that one."*

Orig. price: 25¢ Current NM price: $4



Justice League of America #95 © 1971 DC; art by Neal Adams and Murphy Anderson

***Justice League of America* #95 (Dec 71).** *"The first one I saw Superman, Batman, and all the other characters on the cover."*

Orig. price: 15¢ Current NM price: $15

Astonishing Tales #25 © 1974 Marvel Characters Inc.; art by Rich Buckler and Klaus Janson

***Astonishing Tales* #25 (Aug 74).** *"At this point, I'm already a comics fan buying a lot of stuff, but I was buying all the tried-and-trues, and then all of a sudden you get Deathlok the Demolisher on the cover."*

Orig. price: 25¢ Current NM price: $24

www.mastronet.com

ACTION FIGURE & TOY MARKET REPORT

by TOM BARTSCH

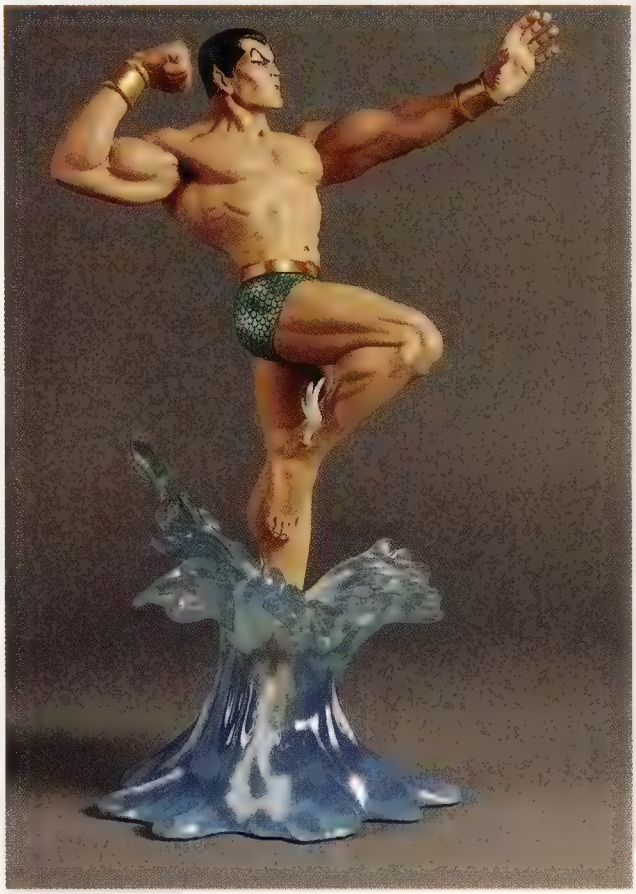
More toys from Hard Hero, Jazwares, and Diamond

The comic-related collectibles keep coming with the latest from Hard Hero, Jazwares, and Diamond Select Toys.

A Hard Hero is a good find

When it comes to super-hero collectibles, the possibilities available seem endless. There is one company making statues of such characters as Captain America, Thor, and the piece reviewed here, Prince Namor, The Sub-Mariner. The 1:6-scale Sub-Mariner, sculpted by Seth Vandable, is depicted as coming out of the water in full muscle pose. The watery hero is limited to 1,000 pieces, retailing for $199 each. There are also 100 copies of the artist-proof edition available, but they are moving fast. And for something that can't readily be found in the United States, check out Hard Hero's European line of 1:10-scale statues. On the way is Daredevil.

For more information on The Sub-Mariner, Daredevil, and a host of other super-hero statues, log onto *www.hardhero.com.*



Make a super-hero Movie

Jazwares is introducing a new product that allows people to direct, produce, and screen their own action movies with the *Marvel Heroes Ani-Movie.* Here's how it works. "Directors" choose one of four backgrounds and place it on a base. Then two-dimensional characters, such as Spider-Man, Hulk, Green Goblin, or Doctor Doom, are posed on the background. Hit the button on the attached digital camera — yes, it's included — and one piece of the movie is captured. Keep moving the figures and snapping the photos until the scene is played out. Then watch as the still shots are transformed into a fluid movie on your television.

Everything is included to make magic happen on the screen, except for three AA batteries. It retails for $60. *The Marvel Ani-Movie* is available at Toys "R" Us.

For more information, visit *www.jazwares.com.*

An exclusive Surfer

Diamond Select Toys has produced a chrome Silver Surfer resin statue inspired by Marvel's recent *Annihilation: Silver Surfer* miniseries. This piece is available only through Best Comics and limited to 500 pieces.

"We're very excited with our first Diamond Select Toys exclusive," said Tommy Best, owner of Best Comics in New Hyde Park, N.Y. "With such a great sculpt to start with, this exclusive version is sure to be very sought after by both collectors and casual fans."

The piece is sculpted by Mike Cussanelli and comes with a hand-numbered base and certificate of authenticity.

To learn more, visit *www.bestcomics.com.*

ANGEL

"What if Spike had been turned into a puppet instead of Angel?"

The answer lies in the form of this all-new puppet Spike plush! This original design depicts the puppet version of the blond Brit himself! This 24" plush toy features the same attention to detail as previous releases and is the perfect companion to the sold-out puppet Angel plush! Limited to 5,000 pieces, the puppet Spike plush features a hand-numbered box with matching certificate of authenticity.

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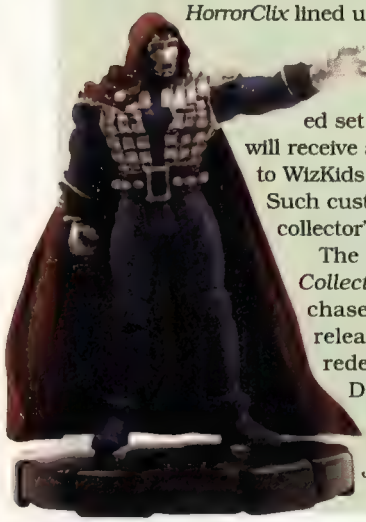
GAME NEWS REPORT

by Bill Bodden and James Mishler

WizKids announces new HeroClix collector sets



Wiz Kids has two new collector sets for *HeroClix* and *HorrorClix* lined up to drive sales though brick-and-mortar retail outlets.

Customers who buy a "brick" of boosters from the associated set at a brick-and-mortal store will receive a coupon which can be mailed to WizKids along with the store receipt. Such customers will be able to order the collector's set before the general public.

The *Marvel HeroClix 2099 Collector's Set* is tied to brick purchases of the *Marvel Supernova* set releasing in November. The redemption period runs from Dec. 6 through Jan. 7; with remaining sets being offered to the general public for $30 Jan. 8.

The *HorrorClix* promotion ties in with the allows fans who redeem their promo-figure coupon from the *HorrorClix* "Buy It By The Brick" program will receive a coupon allowing them to purchase the *HorrorClix: AVP Aliens Collector's Set*. The coupon can be redeemed from Dec. 1 through Dec. 31. Consumers can purchase the set without a coupon for $30 starting Jan. 1.

In both cases, the offer is only available while supplies last. Both sets must be ordered directly from WizKids.

www.wizkidsgames.com

Playmates cancels *BattleDice*

In a recent statement, Playmates Toys announced the end of the line for *Marvel BattleDice*, designed by industry veteran Matt Forbeck. Disappointing sales torpedoed the line despite an aggressive marketing campaign that included sending promo figures to schools.

The already-produced *Series 2* expansion will be scrapped, as will the *DC BattleDice* game slated for fall release. Fans still holding redemption coupons for promotional figures should redeem them as quickly as possible; Playmates promised to continue redemption until early December, but this is likely to be on a first-come, first-served basis and only while supplies last.

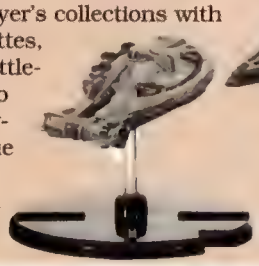
Star Wars Starship Battles arrives in November

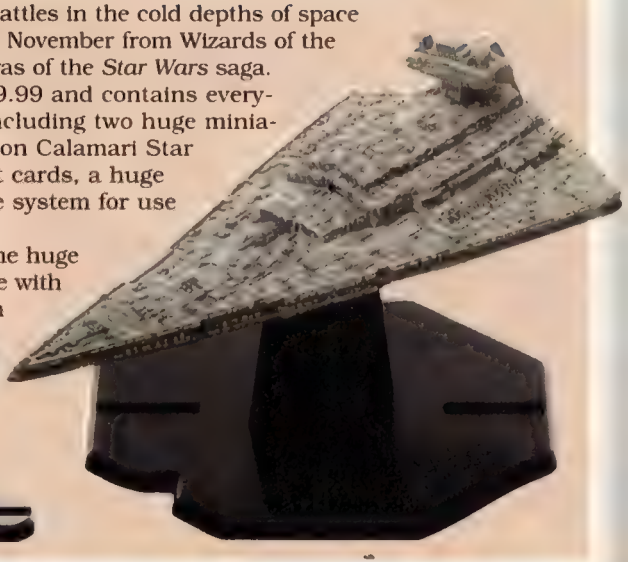
Star Wars fans will finally be able to re-create their favorite battles in the cold depths of space with the *Star Wars Miniatures: Starship Battles* game, coming in November from Wizards of the Coast. Players will be able to build fleets of starships from all eras of the *Star Wars* saga.

The *Star Wars Starship Battles* starter set will retail for $39.99 and contains everything needed to play head-to-head *Star Wars* space battles, including two huge miniatures: the Empire's Super Star Destroyer Executor and the Mon Calamari Star Defender Viscount, plus eight additional starship figures, stat cards, a huge two-sided play mat, and a rulebook, complete with a new rule system for use with *Starship Battles*.

Star Wars Starship Battles booster packs will each contain one huge starship and six additional random pre-painted figures complete with stat cards, retail at $21.99, and expand player's collections with new fighters, corvettes, cruisers, and battleships, in order to create more powerful fleets and decide the fate of the galaxy.

www.wizards.com

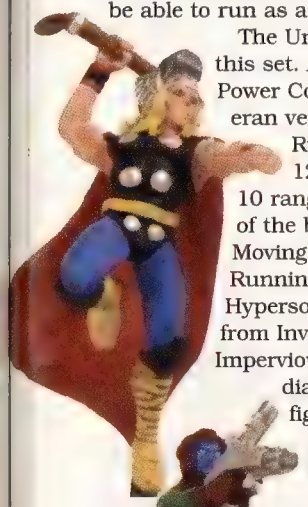




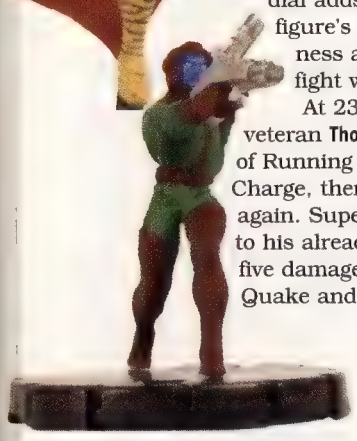
Supernova takes Marvel HeroClix to the stars

Marvel HeroClix Supernova is geared towards the interstellar heroes and villains of the Marvel universe, with five figures over 200 points. It used to be almost the end of a game when a high-point figure took a serious hit. But not only are these figures brutes early in the game, they're also almost as dangerous in the middle or at the end of their dials.

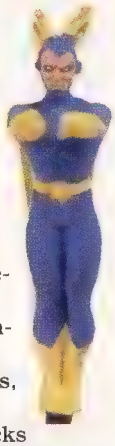
Thanos gets an overhaul worthy of the wearer of the Infinity Gauntlet. At 267 points, every point is earned with an attack value that stays in the double digits his entire 10-click dial. Four clicks of Outwit are followed by two clicks five damage, with mid-dial Probability Control. Phasing gets Thanos into battle early and three clicks of Phasing at the end of the dial makes late escape easier. With the Power Cosmic, he is immune to Outwit and can push without taking damage. This wicked figure just might be able to run as a single-figure army.



The Uniques aren't the only big threats in this set. A revised **Silver Surfer** features the Power Cosmic team ability on the veteran version at 265 points. Running Shot with a 12 movement and 10 range covers most of the battlefield. Moving from Running Shot to Hypersonic Speed and from Invulnerable to Impervious later in the dial adds to the figure's usefulness as the fight wears on.

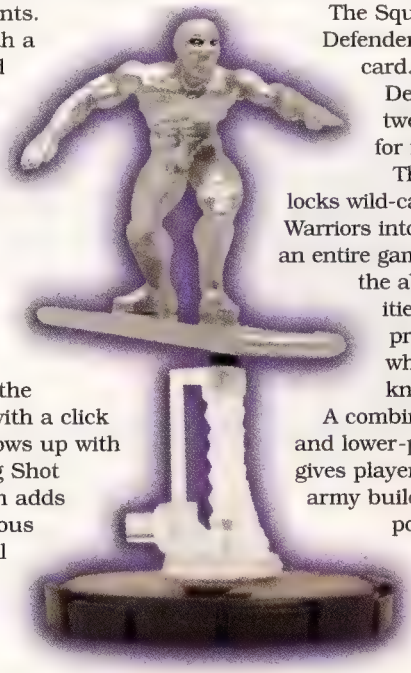


At 235 points, the veteran **Thor** begins with a click of Running Shot, follows up with Charge, then Running Shot again. Super Strength adds to his already dangerous five damage. Late-dial Quake and Willpower and the last two clicks of four damage are not to be ignored.



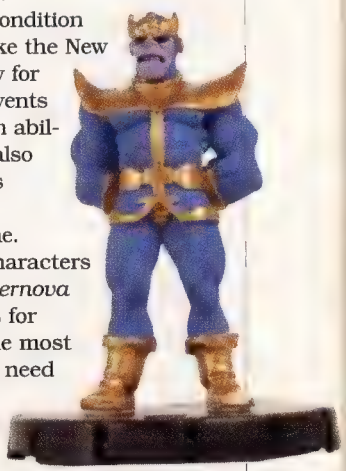
Longtime Avengers villain **Kang** also gets a remake, starting with Running Shot for mobility, a 13 attack, 18 defense, four damage, and Perplex. Double-digit attack values continue for seven of nine clicks, followed up with three clicks of a choice between Psychic Blast or Ranged Combat Expert.

The Defenders get reinforcements in with the debut of the Guardians of the Galaxy. The veteran **Starhawk** has Running Shot giving way to Hypersonic Speed with a 12 range, and Support on the second and third clicks to keep figures healthy. He's also got mid-dial Invulnerability and late-dial Probability Control. Speaking of Probability Control, expect to see a lot of the nine-point **Space Phantom** bystander token.



The Squadron Supreme also features the Defenders team ability and gains their own feat card. The Squadron feat card grants one Defenders team member Mind Control when two friendly teammates are next to each other for five points per figure.

The **Loyalty** battlefield condition locks wild-card team members like the New Warriors into a single team ability for an entire game. This not only prevents the abuse of multiple team abilities by opponents but also preserves team abilities when a source figure is knocked out of the game.



A combination of powerful characters and lower-point soldiers in *Supernova* gives players many new options for army building. And some of the most powerful figures won't need much help. —

Terrence Miltner

COMICS MARKET REPORT

Industry indicators for SEPTEMBER 2006

BACK ISSUE MARKET

CGC (Comics Guaranty LLC) had graded
813,930 comic books
as of its **October 10** population report.

At any given time, eBay offered
107,600 auctions
in its comic-book category.

NEW COMIC-BOOK MARKET

Counting just its Top 300 **comic book titles**, Diamond Comic Distributors sold to comics shops approximately...
6.61 million copies
...**down 2%** from the same month last year.

If all sold, those copies were worth, at full retail, approximately...
$20.44 million
...**up 5%** from the same month last year.

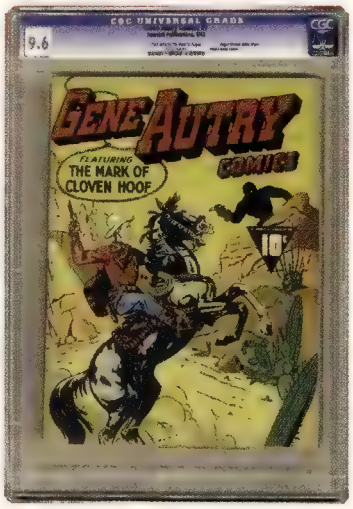
Comics shop final orders for the Top 100 **new trade paperbacks** sold by Diamond were worth approximately...
$3.68 million
...**down 5%** from the same month last year.

Combined, those products equal...
$24/12 million
...**up 4%** from the same month last year.

The total of **all comic books, trade paperbacks, and magazines** retailers bought from Diamond was approximately...
$30.81 million
...**up 5%** from the same month last year.

The **average price** of the typical comic book ordered by retailers was...
$3.21
...**up 20¢** from the same month last year.

Heritage rounds out 2006 with November Signature Sale



Rare pedigreed comics, items from the collection of deejay Wolfman Jack's writer, and other comics memorabilia mark Heritage Comic Auction's final Signature Sale for 2006, scheduled for Nov. 16-18 at its headquarters in Dallas, Texas.

Heritage Vice President Ed Jaster described the upcoming sale as "one of our strongest yet."

"Leading the list is our collection of rare and important comics," he said, "including such landmark books as the Kansas City copy of *Batman* #1, graded VF+ 8.5 with off-white pages by CGC, the Larson copy of *Marvel Comics* #1, CGC-graded VF 8.0 with off-white to white pages, a lovely copy of the hard-to-find *Marvel Mystery Comics* #2, CGC-graded VF/NM 9.0 with white pages, and the 'holy grail' of Western comics, the Mile High copy of *Gene Autry Comics* #1, graded an unbelievable NM+ 9.6 with white pages by CGC. Each of the books has a pre-auction estimate of more than $50,000 with the estimate for *Batman* #1 exceeding $75,000.

The sale also contains items from the collection of Madison Monk, a lifelong resident of Los Angeles, who was also a fan of and, later, writer for deejay Wolfman Jack, including many of the lines spoken in *American Graffiti*. According to Jaster, Monk began collecting during the early Silver Age and items in the sale include his copies of *Sensation Comics* #1, CGC-graded VG 4.0 with off-white pages; *Amazing Fantasy* #15, CGC-graded FN 6.0 with off-white to white pages; and *Amazing Spider-Man* #1, CGC-graded VG/FN 5.0 with off-white pages.

The earliest known Mickey Mouse advertising art created by animator Les Clark in 1929 for the first licensed product, a school writing tablet, highlights the original art portion of the sale with a pre-auction estimate of more than $30,000. The original art for Page 6 of *Fantastic Four Annual* #1 by Jack Kirby and Steve Ditko has a pre-auction estimate of more than $50,000.

Jaster added, "Of course, these few highlights barely scratch the surface of this outstanding auction." A full-color catalog of all the auction's lots is available from Heritage for $50.

In addition to marking the end of another year of sales, the event also marks the end of the firm's fifth year of comics sales. Jaster said, "In that time, we've offered the personal collections of such important figures as Nicolas Cage, Stan Lee, Julius Schwartz, and G.I. Joe creator Don Levine. We've brought a number of important collections to the public, including the John McLaughlin Collection, the Davis Crippen 'D Copy' Collection, the White Rose Collection, and many others."

More information about Heritage's auctions appears at *www.HA.com/Comics* or write the firm at 3500 Maple Ave., 17th Floor, Dallas, TX 75219 or call (800) 872-6467.

Brent Frankenhoff can be reached at ***megaguide@krause.com.***

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Going by the numbers

Mommy, where do comic-book sales come from?

by **MARC PATTEN**

DC and Marvel have been reclaiming market share that has been eroiding over the last 15 years.

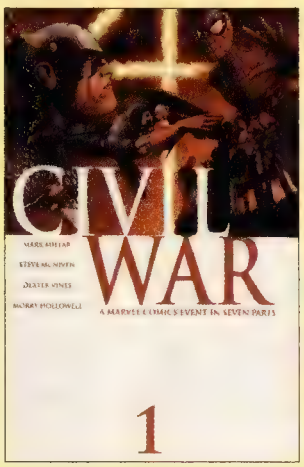
It's no surprise that, with all the great comics coming out from Marvel and DC in the last few years, super-hero comics from the Big Two have taken over the sales charts in growing numbers. After all, since 2000, when the first *X-Men* movie came out, the world has accepted the super-hero genre as mainstream. The fact that kids and adults now love the colorful arena of capes and tights more than ever is exciting, to say the least.

But back to the sales charts, specifically the Diamond Comic Distributors direct-market sales charts: The most amazing statistic of the last few years is how much Marvel and DC now dominate this chart between monthly comics and graphic novels. For example, in September 2006, DC and Marvel accounted for almost 82% of all comics and graphic novels ordered by comic-book stores through Diamond for number of units (comics) sold. In comparison, in September 1997, the Big Two only accounted for about 65% of the total direct market in terms of units. In 1997, Image was a much bigger piece of the puzzle and usually held onto 15%-18% of the market share (before Top Cow and Extreme had separated from the company and after Top Cow returned). I use this time frame instead of going back an even 10 years, because by

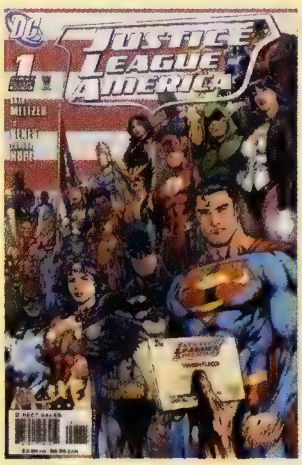
Dozen to dig for

Civil War, 52, Justice League, Superman, Batman, Spider-Man, Avengers, X-Men, Battlestar Galactica, Lone Ranger, Highlander. New comics just can't get much better than they are right now. All the major players have top-notch creative teams and compelling stories, and fans want more! Wait a second. Did I just write *Lone Ranger* in the same sentence as *Civil War*? Read on, True Believer!

1. *Civil War* #1-3. Delays haven't hurt this title at all, as #4 brings readers a shocking death at the hands of the fake Thor, and the story kicks into high gear from here on out. For those few who haven't been reading this blockbuster, what are you waiting for? May-Jul 06. Cover: $2.99 Current prices: #1 and #3 $5@, #2 $7.



2. *Justice League of America* #0 and 1 (tie). The one true Justice League returns finally with an all-star line-up and a new status quo for The Red Tornado. We have only two questions: Who is the big mastermind behind the deception and when does Ambush Bug join? (Without Plastic Man, we need comic relief!) Oct-Nov 06. Cover: $2.99@ Current prices: $5@.



3. *Amazing Spider-Man* #529-532 (tie). Now that these issues have been reprinted in the already-tough-to-find *Civil War: Amazing Spider-Man — Decisions* one-shot, the prices on the originals have stabilized a bit, but demand is still strong. Feb-May 06. Cover: $2.99@ Current prices: #529 1st print $15, 2nd print $6, 3rd print (Wieringo variant) $5; #530-532 $12@.

4. "Civil War" crossovers: *She-Hulk* #8, *Thunderbolts* #103, *X-Factor* #8, *Wolverine*

this point Marvel had stopped distributing its comics through Heroes World and had returned to Diamond, marking the beginning of Diamond's reign as the sole distributor of major direct-market comic books.

It's that word "major" that's been sticking in my craw for a while now. DC and Marvel have been reclaiming market share that has been eroding over the last 15 years. As more and more companies began to crop up, more and more full-color titles became available, and the talent pool was stretched thinner and thinner. Marvel and DC both expanded the number of titles they produced to attempt to reclaim lost market share, but poor quality and marketing gimmicks led to a slide in sales that continued until 2001. Back then, Dark Horse routinely averaged a unit market share of 4.5%, while Image held onto 16%. That left nearly 15% for all other publishers, whether small or mid-sized.

Today, in an average month, Image holds onto a market share of 3%, while Dark Horse has 2.5%-3%. In September 2006, the remaining market share after the Big Four publishers is a paltry 12%. In some months this past year, the non-Big Four publishers took up more than 94% of the market, with Marvel and DC together totaling more than 88%, leaving only 6% for other publishers.

The bottom line is that it's becoming harder and harder for non-Marvel and non-DC comics to find an audience, yet many of them survive and thrive. How is this possible? I've logged enough time working in the publishing end of comics and magazine production over the years that the math doesn't add up. You can't make money manufacturing a full-color comic book with 22 pages of story selling fewer than 12,000 copies to the direct market alone unless you're paying your talent slave wages. I've heard break-even for some publishers is as low as 8,000 — copies and that may be possible, if you have a single creator doing the majority of the writing and art and he or she isn't getting paid much, but in general it's a losing battle. A labor of love, sure, but paying the rent or mortgage? Certainly not.

While I offer the analysis below purely for your entertainment enjoyment, the purpose of exploring this topic is by no means an attempt to downplay the importance of Diamond as a powerful ally of the direct market nor a slap at comics-shop retailers who are still the bread and butter of our industry.

And let's be frank: Probably 90% of the overall sales of all comic books as periodicals come via Diamond — and I'd wager nearly 70% of all graphic novels, trade paperbacks, and hardcovers, as well. Besides, without the big lovable lug of a distributor, we might not have a direct market *at all.*

Finding the audience

So how are these comics surviving? The interesting answer is that many are selling far more copies than we think. The bottom line is that, while many complain that Diamond is the only option to gain access to an audience for their products, others are going elsewhere. Occasionally, this means going directly to the consumer.

"Direct to consumer" is not a new concept. In the comics world, it's as simple as exhibiting at a convention and selling direct

It's becoming harder and harder for non-Marvel and non-DC comics to find an audience, yet many of them survive and thrive. How is this possible?

#42 (tie). These four books are still the Holy Grails of "Civil War" tie-ins, but *She-Hulk* #8 has leapt to the forefront of the pack and is poised to take a big lead. Hopefully, tons of new readers will stay with the witty Dan Slott-written series when the hype wears off. Jun-Aug 06. Cover: $2.99@ Current prices: *She-Hulk* $17; *Wolverine* #42 $12; *Thunderbolts* #103 and *X-Factor* #8 $8@.

5. *New Avengers* #22 and #23 (tie). Love it or hate it, since Brian Michael Bendis has taken over writing *New Avengers*, it's the Marvel series I most look forward to reading each month. With a second title helmed by him with Frank Cho on art, (reportedly, more action adventure-oriented *à la* the classic team), what more can we ask for? Jun-Jul 06. Cover: $2.99 Current prices: $7@.

6. *52* #1, #7, #9, #11, and #15 (tie). What is the meaning of "52"? Who is Super Nova? Is Booster Gold really dead? Will Ralph Dibny become the new Doctor Fate? Will Black Adam and Isis get a new Saturday morning TV show? We want answers *now*! Jul-Sep 06. Cover: $2.50 Current prices: $4@.

7. *Anita Blake: Vampire Hunter: Guilty Pleasures* #1. The best-selling series of novels by Laurell K. Hamilton is now a comics series produced by Dabel Brothers Productions and published with mega-marketing power by Marvel. Stunning art by Brett Booth and an edgy story are causing fans to gobble up copies left and right. Oct 06. Cover: $2.99 Current price: $6.

8. *Action Comics* #844 and *Batman* #655. Here's easy math: A Kubert brother on art plus a Top 5 writer on script equals a huge hit. Grant Morrison and Andy Kubert on the Bat and Geoff Johns and Adam Kubert on the big S, and you've got magic. Oh, and that Richard Donner guy who's made a few hit movies (including some with

You'd think a book targeted to a more comics-history-savvy audience would be better represented in the direct market.

to attendees or selling online on a website or via eBay. Other times, small publishers use the dreaded "V" word that has such a bad reputation in our industry: the variant cover.

Like it or not, variant covers and special-edition comics, especially on non-DC/Marvel books, can make or break a company financially. It can be the difference of affording to have the comic book printed or not. If you are an indy creator, and Midtown Comics in New York City wants its unique cover on your comic and it'll buy 1,000 copies, that's $1,200 or more that you didn't have before. Likewise, it can cost $3,000 or more to exhibit at a large convention, such as the biggies in San Diego, Chicago, and New York, with only a small 10x10-foot booth. Hotel, airfare, and booth space (not to mention the after-hours entertainment budget!) add up. Small- and mid-sized companies need ways to, at least, break even on those expenses. So what do they do? They create some kind of special comic to sell — be it a sketch book, preview book of an upcoming project, or version of a key issue with a different cover.

Selling direct to consumers is nothing new. These days, even Dark Horse and Image (creators and studios) can often be seen selling their products at conventions or online.

I went directly to the source and talked to as many publishers as responded to see what info they would share. While some information is actually for graphic novels or collections via the bookstore market, I've tried to balance that with the same sources for monthly comics where I could.

Eric Reynolds from **Fantagraphics** is very familiar with the dichotomy between comics and graphic novel sales of comic shops versus other revenue streams. Fantagraphics sells its wares through a variety of channels in addition to Diamond, including bookstore distributors Ingram and Baker and Taylor and direct distributors Cold Cut and Last Gasp, as well as selling directly to consumers via conventions and a website.

Reynolds cited two recent publications. The first was *The Comics Journal Library Vol. 7: Harvey Kurtzman*. The sales figure percentages are as follows: Orders through Diamond: 27%; orders through the book trade: 68%; orders through smaller comics distributors: 2% (not including Cold Cut, since it now offers backlist reorders only, no initial pre-orders). Reynolds said that this breakdown is a fairly good representation of a typical book or trade publication for Fantagraphics. The interesting thing to note about this is that you'd think a book targeted to a more comics-history-savvy audience, such as this one, would be better represented in the direct market, so orders should be skewed toward comics shops who order through Diamond's *Previews* catalog. Not so in this case.

Fantagraphics' second case is the first issue of a regular series entitled *New Tales of Old Palomar*. The sales broke down as follows: Diamond: 93%; smaller comics distributors: 2%; stores and others that ordered directly from the publisher: 5%. Not a huge percentage of sales in the non-direct market category, but 7% of the total is still important in the life cycle of a comic with a smaller press run.

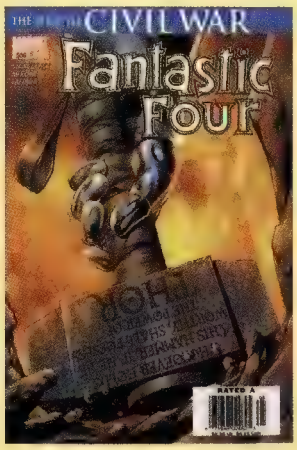
Reynolds commented that he wondered if the competition of distributors that still thrives in the book market would benefit the direct market and spur new growth.

The Man of Steel) doesn't hurt things, either. Sep 06 and Dec 06. Cover: $2.99 Current prices: $5@.

9. *Heroes for Hire* #1. Billy Tucci's first work on a regular series for Marvel has turned a good story by Jimmy Palmiotti and Justin Gray into a blockbuster. It sold out a print run of more than 80,000 copies and quickly went to a second printing. Stunning covers by Tucci and painter Mark Sparacio are making mega-waves. Aug 06. Cover: $2.99 Current prices: 1st print $6, 2nd print $4.

10. *Battlestar Galactica* #1, *Highlander* #1, *Lone Ranger* #1. Dynamite Entertainment's slew of new licensed titles is making waves like nobody's business. The bottom line is that quality sells, and solid creative teams gave fans what they wanted: stories that pulled no punches and tied in perfectly with their respective movies or TV shows. Jul-Oct 06. Cover: $2.99 Current prices: $5@.

11. *Star Wars* #1s (tie). Nothing heats up the back-issue demand like a second printing of a first issue — in this case, *three* first issues.



Dark Horse rarely reprints titles like this, but fans spoke, and it listened. Jan-Jun 06. Cover: $2.99@ Current prices: *Star War: Knights of the Old Republic* #1 $12; *Star Wars: Legacy* #1 $10; *Star Wars: Rebellion* #1 $8.

12. *Fantastic Four* #536 and #537 (tie). Thor. Thor. Thor. That's all we seem to hear about these days. These two gems spark the new beginning for our hero and aren't cooling down any time soon. It doesn't hurt that J. Michael Straczynski is confirmed to be writing the new *Thor* series, even as he steps down from *FF*. Apr-May 06. Cover: $2.99@ Current prices: #536 $10, #537 $7.

Top Shelf Comics Publisher Chris Staros said that he still believed the direct market is the meat and potatoes of the comics industry as a whole. It just doesn't absorb all of the sales of the indy (read: independent or non-Marvel, DC, Dark Horse, or Image) market.

While Top Shelf doesn't sell monthly periodical comics, it does publish such high-profile graphic novels as Alan Moore's *From Hell* and *Lost Girls* and Craig Thompson's *Blankets*. In the case of many well-publicized books in our industry, the book-market trade tends to cherry-pick the best of the best, order significant amounts, and reorder often. This can increase sales of these titles significantly — often to two or three times what direct-market comics shops have ordered. Staros said that this can amount to 75%-80% of a print run, as was the case for *From Hell*.

In general, Staros broke down the sales percentages of an average title as follows: one-third direct market (Diamond), one-third book trade, and one-third via conventions and direct to consumer through the company's website. Lines like *Owly* by Andy Runton or anything from Jeffrey Brown (*Every Girl Is the End of the World for Me*) or James Kochalka (*American Elf*) fall into this "average title" category. The company typically exhibits at more than 20 conventions a year, selling its wares directly to consumers to help cover costs and letting fans hobnob with creators.

Staros was quick to say that most Top Shelf titles rarely ended high on the Diamond Top 100 Graphic Novels chart each month. He said that the chart usually represents a snapshot of the inventory position retailers are willing to invest in a title for the first few weeks of sales — *i.e.*, how many copies of a book they can sell in the first few weeks after the title ships. In the case of many independent graphic novels, stores will continue to reorder one copy here or there every few weeks or months, which keeps steady sales perpetual throughout the year. So, although a comics shop may order only two copies of a book initially, that same store might order a combined total of 15 to 20 more copies throughout the year.

Oh, and in case you're wondering: Alan Moore's *League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* Vol. 3 will arrive in 2008 from Top Shelf — most likely, in three 72-page periodical installments before being collected.

David Petersen's *Mouse Guard* published by **Archaia Studios Press** (ASP) is a series that's received a lot of buzz, and back-issue prices on the first few issues have gone through the roof as evidenced by the title's continuous appearance on the *Dozen to Dig For* here each month. This is a perfect example of my comments above. It's a monthly comic book that began as a labor of love, had a small but healthy first printing (8,000 copies) of its first issue, and, when word traveled of its sellout, the "hot comic" mentality took over. (Many times, a comic can become "hot" because people want what they can't have or find. The harder it is to locate something, the more they want it — a human psychological dilemma.)

In the case of *Mouse Guard*, only a small

Only a small number of shops ordered *Mouse Guard* from Diamond, and they didn't order in huge quantities.

***Zoom Suit* #1 — 41,500 total copies sold**

Not bad for a comic book from a non-Top 10 publisher

20,000 copies sold to Diamond, including reorders via 1,150 retailer accounts

5,000 copies of "Team Zoom edition" given away to every Diamond account that carried comics

2,000 copies of the regular edition sold directly to consumers via signings, appearances, and company website (*www.superverse.com*)

2,000 Armored Legends Jim Starlin cover (given to promotional partners and sold directly to retail stores and to consumers)

2,000 Armored Legends Bob Layton cover (given to promotional partners and sold directly to retail stores and to consumers)

5,000 "Suspended Animation Edition" (animated-film-themed cover with DVD film short sold via Amazon.com, film festivals, and trade shows), also as a set in #1-4 with DVD through Diamond

5,000 film festival editions sold only at the film festivals where the *Zoom Suit* animated short was playing

500 "Friends and Family" editions given away as a thank you

***Zoom Suit* #2 — 15,000 total copies sold**

7,200 copies sold to Diamond, including reorders

7,800 copies sold of regular and four special editions directly to retailers or consumers

***Zoom Suit* #3 — 13,000 total sold**

5,000 copies sold to Diamond including reorders

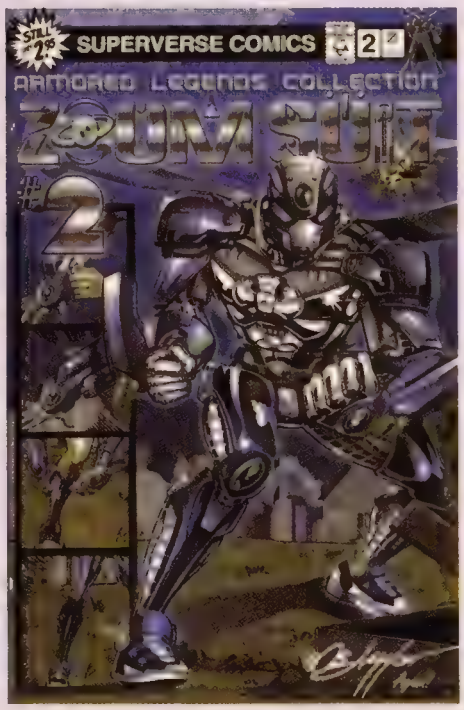
8,000 copies sold of regular and four special editions directly to retailers or consumers

***Zoom Suit* #4 — 9,200 total sold**

3,800 copies sold to Diamond including reorders

1,400 copies sold directly to stores of the regular edition

4,000 copies sold of miscellaneous special editions sold directly to retailers or consumers



number of shops had ordered the comic from Diamond, and they didn't order in huge quantities. When it quickly sold out, the word spread. So, when the casual customer went into his shop, hoping to check out the issue to see what all the hubbub was about, either the shop was sold out or — as in most cases — the shop had never ordered copies to begin with.

A comics shop near me orders tightly. If you don't get there within a week or so after an issue has come out, it has usually sold out. In the store's defense: It will constantly reorder or special-order items for customers, but it doesn't have a practice of keeping all titles in stock for a number of months. About a week after the second issue hit, I asked if the shop carried the title; staffers said they'd never heard of it. I then grew curious and started calling stores in the area, trying to find copies — with no luck. I then went online — and lost several auction attempts on eBay. This began to frustrate me — and I just wanted to *read* the thing! Lo and behold, as back-issue prices rose and the book became more popular, my comics shop began carrying the title with #3 and the latest printings of the first two issues.

Mouse Guard #1 has sold more than 20,000 copies in its three printings, yet, according to the Diamond Top 300 sales charts over the last nine months, only 11,600 were sold that registered *on that chart*. The second issue sold out of 10,000 copies of its first printing and more than 5,000 copies of the second printing. The Diamond charts show that the distributor sold 7,900 first prints and 2,800 second prints. *Mouse Guard* #3 sold out of its 13,000-copy initial print run and is several thousand copies sold into its second printing; Diamond retailers only ordered 8,300 copies. Finally, #4 has sold nearly the same (at approximately 14,000 copies thus far of its reported 20,000-copy run), but only 12,400 were sold via Diamond as of last month. So, while the *majority* of orders came through Diamond accounts, Petersen and ASP have sold thousand of copies directly to retail stores and at conventions across the country since February. At the February 2006 New York Comic-Con alone, Petersen reported that he sold 300 copies of #1, plus several hundred copies of a sketchbook-style publication. That's amazing for an unknown (at the time) creator and/or publisher.

Will the *real* indy sales phenomenon please stand up?

Many readers know the name John Tadeo. John is a former Marvel Comics marketing guy from years back who left comics

to start several companies that he ran with his wife, Donna, in Florida. A few years ago, John was doing well for himself and decided to look at the comics world again in attempts to buy the bankrupt companies CrossGen and Valiant (the latter a division of Acclaim Entertainment). He then decided to put his money where his mouth was and self-publish *Zoom Suit*, a kid-friendly superhero comic-book series about a boy who finds an Iron Man-like armored alien suit. Through his company, **Superverse Comics**, he spent two years marketing the heck out it in a grass-roots blitz unlike anything else seen recently for a new title.

Taddeo had an animated short created that he entered in dozens of film festivals around the country, winning awards. He took his time and talked to retailers to find out what might push them to order more of his comic book (or just order it *at all* in many cases). He cut special deals with printers and paper and production companies to get reduced manufacturing rates. He created numerous special editions of each of the four issues — partly as retailer-ordering incentives, partly as promotional giveaways, and some just to help defray the costs of attempting to produce and sell a full-color comics series in a difficult marketplace.

Between all the cover variations, sales of total print runs of each of the four issues added up to staggering numbers above and beyond the already significant orders placed by Diamond and ordered by Diamond's approximately 3,600 retailer customers.

But the 3,600 stores were not necessarily the true market for him, and Taddeo concurred. Of these 3,600 stores, not all of them will order a comic book. Sure, most of these will order all DC and Marvel output, but everything else, including Image and Dark Horse, is a crapshoot. And, if you're an unknown creator or publisher (as I've said earlier), your chances of getting even a few hundred stores to order your product are slim.

An indy comic, if it's lucky, will be picked up by 200-300 stores on average — a fact confirmed by several publishers. Taddeo said that many independent publishers have grown to call these approximately 300 stores "The Noble 300." *Zoom Suit*, however, was carried by almost 1,150 stores through Diamond. So, keeping the math simple, this title was sold by four times the number of outlets a normal independent title reaches.

But it doesn't stop there. Imagine what this title could have sold, if the other 2,400 stores had tried to sell it. Again using basic math, it could have been as high as 60,000 copies, which would be mind-blowing for such a product.

Taddeo was kind enough to provide hard numbers (the best possible approximations). It provides a sample of how a smart marketer can blow his sales out to the masses at an incredible rate, using telephone, e-mail, and personal appearances.

One interesting aspect is that, while many publishers who sell directly to retail stores sell their regular editions at 40% to 50% off the cover price, such special releases as variants or incentive editions are either not wholesaled at all or they are wholesaled at a discount off the increased collector price. (A variant cover normally sold for $10 would be wholesaled for $5 to $6.) Taddeo wanted to support retailers who supported him. So, if he wholesaled a quantity of comics to a store, he often did so at $1.50 per comic across the board, whether it was a $3 regular edition or a $20 special Armored Legend edition. (For those with a short memory: He's also the guy who offered Diamond retailer accounts 75% off their orders on the first issue as yet another incentive to get stores to try his book.)

Taddeo told me an anecdote that makes a good point. "I was in a comics store buying comics, and a guy had his son with him, but the kid never took his eyes off his Gameboy. The guy shopped, made his purchases, and left — with his son never aware of all the cool stuff he could have been thumbing through while his dad looked around.

"I told the store owner that I'd never seen anything like that in my life. When we were young, there were a million people who got me into comics. Now, even parents who *read* them don't seem to make an effort." I'd add that the clerk also had seemed to make no effort to show the boy something that might interest him.

Beyond "The Noble 300," it's a huge undertaking to convince the other 3,300 retailers to carry a comic book. Just because there is a demand for something doesn't mean that it sold well — and the opposite is true, as well. Demand can be created. As long as you put out a good-quality product *and* get the word to the public and retailers who ultimately order the comics, the possibilities are endless.

Remember, for every 10 people who go into a comics shop looking for something, only one person asks. Those other nine people just continue the hunt. Let your store owner or manager know, when there is a comic you want but don't see on the shelves. You *both* may find something new to read.

Beyond "The Noble 300," it's a huge undertaking to convince the other 3,300 retailers to carry a comic book.

MARC PATTEN owns Destination Entertainment, a marketing and product-development consulting company, and Heroes In Action, a pop-culture-products convention and mail-order business. E-mail Marc at **HeroesInAction@aol.com**.

Line up for this variant!

Exclusive Marvel military series scores direct hit

by **WILLIAM INSIGNARES**

Titles so far:

#1 ***New Avengers Guest Starring The Fantastic Four*** **(May 05)**

#2 ***The New Avengers: Pot of Gold*** **(Nov 05)**

#3 ***Avengers & X-Men: Time Trouble***

Avengers & X-Men: Time Trouble is the third in Marvel's military exclusive comics series produced for the Army & Air Force Exchange Service. Written by Robert Kirkman, this new story featuring a host of different Marvel characters is full of Marvel continuity information that readers will not possess until they read the book. Kirkman makes no mention of when the story takes place, but he said it is not a "what if" story, so it apparently fits in normal Marvel continuity.

Without requiring a Spoiler Warning, I can tell you one important fact for all continuity buffs and Marvel fans to become excited about: The story features the previously unseen first meeting between The New Avengers and The Astonishing X-Men. Those who have read and enjoyed Kirkman's past projects for Marvel will like this tale. Although he does not raise heroes from the dead in this publication, he does bring to "life" someone who fans thought could not "live" in this Marvel era.

Special comics like these are usually a win-win situation on many fronts. Marvel gets to show its support for the American troops by publishing the AAFES comic book and distributing it free. The book has paid advertisements from vendors that sell products in military bases, so they get to advertise their wares to potential customers. The money collected from the ads helps offset printing costs. Military personnel receive a free comic book and may become potential future comics readers. If they enjoy it, they may seek to buy other related comics in the near future, so retailers would profit. Retailers and dealers also profit, because they will eventually sell the books when demand outweighs supply. [Yes, the issue has the proverbial disclaimer — "Not for Resale" — but those words are heeded about as often as the bold red "Fragile" on packages is heeded by shipping company employees.

Completists, well, just have to have them. Collectors and fans come in different levels, but some love the comics because they have a limited print run; others because it is a new story. Other collectors will love them because they are hard to find in Near Mint condition. The books are given out without protective sleeve or backing, often at a grocery store or gas station in a military compound. Sales clerks are given a small stack, which they almost always keep by the register. The book goes into the grocery bag, maybe between the bananas and the gallon of milk, then into the trunk of a car.

By the time the customer has gone through the checkpoints and over the speed bumps exiting the base, arrived home, and popped the trunk — Presto change-o. What used to look like a shapely 10.0 now looks like a 5.0 with a bad spine. This causes the prices of Near Mint copies of such exclusive items as this to go up. This particular military exclusive comic was released in late September, so prices were not available at press time.

The previous two comics in the series have sold for between $7 and $25 each uncertified, on average. Prices for certified copies in 9.8 fluctuate, but they have sold for more than $75 each. No exact information is available on the print run of each edition nor how many survived the trip out of the base in pristine condition, but one thing is for sure: America is the only country in the world where a freebie that may be given to a shopper at the supermarket checkout can be worth more than the full grocery cart of actual purchases.

Comics specialist **WILLIAM INSIGNARES** runs **DemolitionComics.com** in Tampa, Fla., which he bills as "The world's first multi-lingual international comics super store." He can be contacted at (813) 832-2692.

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Agreeable Comics

Probably the best mini-comic anthology I've ever seen, *Agreeable Comics* are extremely agreeable. The issue features: "Der Faust" (an overzealous, German superhero that punches more than he thinks), "The Kings of Pop" (two brothers on a mission to find the perfect carbonated beverage), "Kevin Analog" (a super-hero that uses the power of mix tapes to fight evil), and "Zombie Businessman Roommate" (a real zombie who is a businessman and has a live roommate).

AGREEABLE COMICS
WRITERS AND ARTISTS:
KEVIN CHURCH, BENJAMIN BIRDIE
B/W • 8 Pgs.
$1

"Kings of Pop" was especially funny because the two brothers just complain about everything. I didn't really get the cover, which featured a note that says, "Do you like this comic?" and boxes for "yes," "no," and "maybe."

It's hilarious. Each one of these stories was short, to the point, and funny. It's amazing what you can jam into six little panels. The art is right on the money. The creators also have a weekly strip called *Nitroglycerin* which is available through Boom Studios at *www.boom-studios.com*. It's in color and you can read it for free. It's just as funny as the issue, go click. These guys are good. Buy their comics.

★★★½ — **Tony DiGerolamo**

www.agreeablecomics.com

RetroView™ The Amazing Spider-Man 2000

Reviewed by Brent Frankenhoff

The second year of *Amazing Spider-Man* Vol. 2 was marked with change. Artist and co-writer John Byrne left mid-year to be replaced, temporarily, with artist Erik Larsen and, then, with new ongoing artist John Romita Jr., who would continue into writer J. Michael Straczynski's run which would begin in 2001.

Sub-plots that had carried over from Vol. 1 or had begun in Vol. 2 were resolved by year's end, while at least another new one got under way. Longtime readers would also be treated to the return of some old friends and at least one longtime artist as inker.

Amazing Spider-Man ™ Marvel

COST TO OWN THE ORIGINALS IN NM: $33

Action Comics (DC, 1938)	UNSLABBED Near Mint
0	.3
1	330000
➥1st Superman	
1/Ashcan	20000
2	29250
3	19000
4-5	10600
6	15400
7	15500
8-9	6650
10	8200
11-12	4150
13	6175
14	3825
15	6175
16	3125
17	4350
18	3825
19	4050
20	3825
21-22	2600
23	7300
➥1st Luthor	
24-25	2475
26	2060
27-30	1700
31-32	2600
33	7300
➥1st Mr. America	
34-35	2475
36	2060
37-40	1700
41	1050
42	2600
➥1st Vigilante	
43-46	980
47	1300
➥1st Luthor cover	
48-52	980
53	850
54-60	710
61-63	630
64	750
65-70	630
71-99	580
100	600
101	1200
➥A-Bomb cover	
102-126	525
127	600
128-150	525
151-157	480
158	750
➥Superman origin	
159-161	450
162	500
163-180	385
181-201	340
202-220	290
221-240	240
241	250
242	1200
➥1st Brainiac	
243-251	185
252	1200
➥1st Supergirl	
253	425
254	325
255	225
256-261	100
262	90
263	100
264-266	80
267	650
➥1st Colossal Boy	
268-270	80
271-275	65
276	125
➥Legion app.	
277-284	60
285	100
➥Legion app.	
286-294	60
295	90
296	65
297	90
298-299	60
300-316	50
317-324	40
325	50
326-333	40
334	60
335-338	40
339	70
340-346	40
347	50
348-362	40
363-373	30
374-387	20
388	25
389-399	20
400	40
401-406	17
407	15
408	20
409	15
410-411	13
412-415	12
416-418	11
419	14
420-422	11
423-424	10
425	19
426	10
427-436	8
437	29
➥Giant-size issue	
438-439	8
440	25
➥1st Grell Green Arrow	
441	12
442	8
443	26
➥Giant-size issue	
444-454	7
455-465	6
466	7
467-484	5
485	8
486-503	5
504-544	4
545-566	3
567-597	2
598	15
➥1st Checkmate	
599	2
600	5
601-659	2
660	3
661	2
662	4
663-682	2
683-684	3
685-687	2
687/Collector's	3
688-695	2
695/Variant	3
696-699	2
700	3
700/Platinum	5
701-769	2
770	4
771-774	2
775	5
775/2nd	4
776-799	2
800	4
801-810	2
811	5
812	8
812/2nd	2
813	4
814-817	3
818	4
819-825	3
826	5
➥Inf Crisis tie	
827-828	3
829	6
829/Variant	3
830	4
831-843	3
1000000	1
Ann 1	4
Ann 2-6	3
Ann 7	4
Ann 8	3
Ann 9	4

Adventure Comics (DC, 1938)	UNSLABBED Near Mint
32	2800
33-35	1450
36-39	1275
40	36000
➥1st Sandman	
41	4700
42	5500
43	3200
44	5500
45	2800
46-47	4200
48	22000
➥1st Hourman	
49-50	1950
51	2630
➥Sandman cover	
52	1600
➥1st Kirk Manhunter	
53-59	1450
60	2500
61	10750
➥1st Starman	
62-65	1300
66	1800
67-68	1300
69	1650
70-71	1275
72	13200
➥1st Kirby Sandman	
73	11500
➥1st Kirby Manhunter	
74-80	1500
81-91	925
92-99	700
100	800
101-102	700
103	2400
➥Super-heroes start	
104	850
105-110	525
111-120	450
121-126	390
127	450
128	400
129-130	375
131-149	340
150-151	425
152	310
153	425
154	310
155	425
156	310
157	425
158	310
159	425
160	310
161	425
162	310
163	425
164-169	310
170-180	255
181-199	235
200	350
201-209	260
210	2400
➥1st Krypto	
211-220	200
221-246	170
247	4400
➥1st Legion	
248-255	130
256	525
257-259	125
260	500
➥Aquaman origin	
261-266	80
267	740
➥2nd Legion	
268	80
269	225
➥1st Aqualad	
270	80
271	225
➥Lex Luthor origin	
272-274	65
275	145
276-280	65
281	60
282	95
283	100
284	60
285-286	110
287-289	60
290	100
291-292	45
293	100
294	90
➥1st Mon-El Legion	
295-298	45
299	55
300	200
➥Legion	
301	70
302-305	55
306-323	45
324-339	40
340	45
341-345	40
346	60
347-350	40
➥1st White Witch	
351-352	50
353-355	35
356	30
357	60
358-366	30
367-372	25
373	22
374	30
375-377	22
378	45
379-380	22
381	60
➥Supergirl starts	
382-389	22
390	30
391-400	22
401-402	21
403	50
404-415	20
416	18
417-427	13
428	28
➥1st Black Orchid	
429-430	15
431	28
➥Aparo Spectre	
432-433	15
434-435	12
436-441	10
442-447	6
448-458	5
459-460	4
461	6
462	7
463-479	4
480-503	3

Adventures of Superman (DC, 1987)	UNSLABBED Near Mint
0-424	.3
425	.4
426	.3
427-462	.2
463	.3
464-465	.2
466	.3
467-479	.2
480	.3
481-495	.2
496-498	.3
499	.5
500	.3
500/Collector's	.4
500/Silver	.10
501-505	.2
505/Variant	.3
506-549	.2
550	.4
551-599	.2
600	.4
601-623	.2
624	.5
625	.4
625/2nd	.3
626	.2
627-635	.3
636	.5
➥Identity Crisis tie	
637	.4
638	.3
639	.5
640-641	.4
642	.6
643	.12
644-648	.3
649	.10
1000000	.2
Ann 1	.4
Ann 2-6	.3
Ann 7-9	.4

Albedo (THOUGHTS & IMAGES, 1984)	UNSLABBED Near Mint
0	.8
0/A	.30
0/B	.15
1	.14
1/A	.10
2	.250
➥1st Usagi Yojimbo	
3	.10

△ #1

Sensation Comics

A super-heroic *Sensation*

Published with the same cover date as *All-Star Comics* #1 (Jan 42), *Sensation Comics* #1 featured the origins of Wonder Woman, Wildcat, and Mr. Terrific, as well as the first appearances of the latter two Golden Age crimefighters and, later, JSA members.

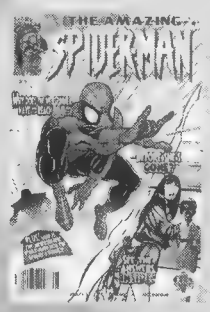
Image © 1942 DC

1st Wildcat, Mr. Terrific ▼ | Black Pirate appears ▼ | 1st magic lasso ▼ | Buy Bonds cover ▼

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	JAN 42	FEB 42	MAR 42	APR 42	MAY 42	JUN 42	JUL 42	AUG 42	SEP 42
NM Price	$27500	$5200	$2750	$1850	$1550	$1400	$1140	$1140	$1140

THE BOTTOM LINE

Amazing Spider-Man #13 ★★★



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"Time Enough ...?"

Wrapped up in his webslinging activities, Peter Parker forgets that he was to be home to talk about his marriage with Mary Jane.

Despite the cover's tease about a "mystery villain," Spider-Man never faces the new Rocket Racer who's even lamer than the original concept.

John Byrne and Howard Mackie get down to the heart of what Spider-Man's all about, always trying to do the right thing no matter what the cost is to him personally. In this case, it may be Mary Jane herself.

The story is interrupted by a totally unnecessary multi-page public service announcement in the middle of the issue.

Marvel
Jan 2000 • 22 pp.
Writers: John Byrne, Howard Mackie
Pencils: Byrne
Inks: Al Milgrom
Cover: Byrne

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9-14 2	1 12500	➥Batmn, Supes app.		11-18 1275	
	➥Flash origin	37 900		19 3350	
All-American Comics	2 2400	38 975		21 3500	
DC, 1939	3-4 1600	➥Black Canary starts		➥Scarce	
1 5700	5-10 1100	39-49 900		**All-Winners Comics**	
2 2000	11-15 850	50 975		TIMELY, 1948	
3 1400	16-20 800	➥Frazetta art		1 1800	
4-5 1250	21-32 625	51-56 900		**Alpha Flight**	
6-7 980		57 1200		MARVEL, 1983	
8 1800	**All New Collectors' Edition**	➥25-year hiatus starts		1 5	
9-10 950	DC, 1977	58 12		➥1st Marrina. Puck	
11 1025	C-53 26	➥1st Power Girl		2-10 4	
12-15 950	➥Rudolph	59-61 6		11-19 3	
16 72000	C-54 12	62 8		20-24 2	
➥1st Green Lantern	➥Supes v. WWoman	63 6		25-27 1	
17 15600	C-55 15	64-65 7		28 3	
➥2nd Green Lantern	➥Legion	66 8		29-32 2	
18 8800	C-56 40	67-68 6		33 6	
19 13800	➥Superman vs. Ali	69 10		➥Wolverine appears	
➥1st Atom	C-58 12	70-73 6		34 3	
20 4850	➥Supes vs. Shazam	74 8		35-45 2	
21-23 2000	C-60 20			46 3	
24 2200	➥Rudolph's Summer	**All-Star Squadron**		47 4	
➥1st Mid-Nite, Sargon	C-62 12	DC, 1981		➥1st Jim Lee at Marvel	
25 8300	➥Superman movie	1 4		48-53 2	
➥Dr. Mid-Nite origin		2-10 2		54 3	
26 3000	**All Star Batman and Robin Boy Wonder**	11-46 1		55-56 2	
➥Sargon origin	DC, 2005	47 3		57-74 1	
27 3500	1/Both 5	48-67 1		75-105 2	
28-30 1250	1/Special 4	Ann 1 2		106 3	
31-40 1040	1/RRP 150	Ann 2-3 1		➥Northstar outed	
41-50 785	2/Both 4			107-130 2	
51-60 675	3/Both 3	**All-Star Superman**		Ann 1 4	
61 4400		DC, 2006		Ann 2 1	
➥1st Solomon Grundy	**All-Star Comics**	1-5 3		Special 1 3	
62-70 600	DC, 1940				
71-88 550	1 10000	**All-Star Western**		**Amazing Adult Fantasy**	
89 1200	2 3500	DC, 1970		MARVEL, 1961	
➥1st Harlequin	3 25000	1 30		7 600	
90 775	➥1st JSA	2-3 15		8 475	
91-99 525	4 3000	4-5 14		9-13 425	
100 850	5 2800	6-9 9		14 525	
101 1000	➥1st Hawkgirl	10 260			
➥Scarce	6-7 1800	➥1st Jonah Hex		**Amazing Adventures**	
102 1650	8 16000	11 75		MARVEL, 1970	
➥Scarce	➥1st Wonder Woman			1 30	
	9-11 1600	**All-Winners Comics**		2-3 20	
All-American Western	12-15 1400	TIMELY, 1941		4-5 14	
DC, 1948	16-25 1200	1 16000		6 20	
103 375	26-32 900	➥Cap America starts			
104 265	33 1800	2 4800			
105-110 225	➥Grundy appearance	3 2850			
111-120 165		4 2800			
121-126 110					

Do-It-Yourself Grading

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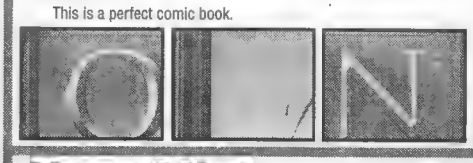
Mint

Abbreviated: **M**

This is a perfect comic book.



The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 10.0 grade.**

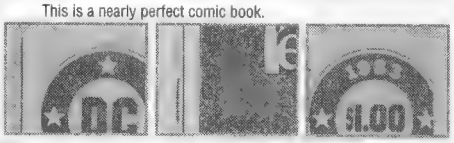
Its cover has full luster, with edges sharp and pages like new. There are no signs of wear or aging. It is not imperfectly printed or off-center.

Occasionally referred to as "Gem Mint," a term used by sportscard dealers.

Near Mint

Abbreviated: **NM**

This is a nearly perfect comic book.



The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 9.4 grade.**

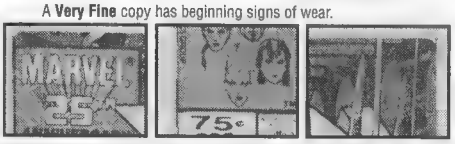
Its cover shows barely perceptible signs of wear.

Its spine is tight, and its cover has only minor loss of luster and only minor printing defects. Some discoloration is acceptable in older comics — as are signs of aging.

Very Fine

Abbreviated: **VF**

A **Very Fine** copy has beginning signs of wear.



The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 8.0 grade.**

There can be slight creases and wrinkles at the staples, but it is a flat, clean issue with definite signs of being read a few times.

There is some loss of the original gloss, but it is in general an attractive comic book.

Fine

Abbreviated: **F, Fn**

A **Fine** comic book is a good-looking copy ... at first glance.

The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 6.0 grade.**

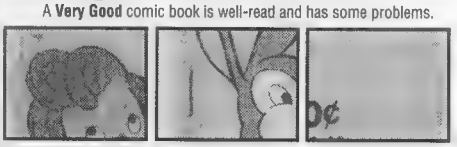
This comic book's cover is worn but flat and clean with no defacement. There is usually no writing on the cover or tape repair.

Stress lines around the staples and more rounded corners are permitted.

Very Good

Abbreviated: **VG**

A **Very Good** comic book is well-read and has some problems.



The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 4.0 grade.**

Most of the original gloss is gone. There are minor markings, discoloration, and/or heavier stress lines around the staples and spine.

The cover may have minor tears and/or corner creases, and spine-rolling is generally permissible.

Good

Abbreviated: **G, Gd**

A **Good** copy is a very worn comic book with nothing missing.

The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 2.0 grade.**

Creases, minor tears, rolled spine, and cover flaking are generally permissible in this grade.

Older Golden Age comic books often come in this condition.

Fair

Abbreviated: **FA, Fr.**

A **Fair** copy has multiple problems but is structurally intact.

The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 1.0 grade.**

Copies may have a soiled, slightly damaged cover, a badly rolled spine, cover flaking, corners gone, and tears.

Tape may be present and is always considered a defect.

Poor

Abbreviated: **P, Pr**

A **Poor** copy is damaged and generally unsuitable for collecting.

The term for this grade is the same one used for **CGC's 0.5 grade.**

While the copy may still contain some readable stories, major defects get in the way.

Copies may be in the process of disintegrating and may do so with even light handling.

Hitler, Tojo, Mussolini cover

War cover

Jeep on cover

10 OCT 42	11 NOV 42	12 DEC 42	13 JAN 43	14 FEB 43	15 MAR 43	16 APR 43	17 MAY 43	18 JUN 43	19 JUL 43	20 AUG 43	21 SEP 43	22 OCT 43
NM Price $1140	$1075	$1075	$1075	$1075	$1075	$1075	$1075	$1075	$1075	$1075	$840	$840

PRICE GUIDE KEY: OTHER CGC GRADES

Slabbed CGC 9.8 (NM/M) is **3 times** the CGC 9.4 price above
CGC 9.0 (VF/NM) is **2/5 (40%)** of CGC 9.4
CGC 9.6 (NM+) is **1.5 times** CGC 9.4
CGC 8.0 (VF) is **1/5 (20%)** of CGC 9.4

Albion #6

At long last, time-lost highwayman Charlie Peace, Robot Archie, Bad Penny (daughter of Eric Dolman, inventor of a troupe of robot "dolls"), and comics fan Danny finally reach the castle prison which holds several decades of British heroes and villains and attempt the jailbreak of the century.

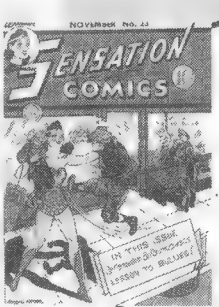
DC/WILDSTORM
WRITERS:
ALAN MOORE, LEAH MOORE, JOHN REPPION
ARTIST:
SHANE OAKLEY
COLOR • 32 PGS.
$2.99

In the recent late-comic-book derby, *Albion* #6 places somewhere between *Civil War* #4 and *Ultimates 2* #12 and, like those comics, the key question is: Was it worth the wait? Unfortunately, no, because even if you were predisposed to like it and came in with a better than average knowledge of British comics (like myself), the bulk of this issue would cascade wildly over your head.

I could hardly keep track of the main characters, let alone the dozens of cameos by people (and things) who I conclude must have been from some UK comic — I just had no idea which one. (If ever there was a comic that needed annotation, this is it.) And poor Robot Archie deserved far better.

★★ **— S.A. Bennett**

www.dccomics.com



△ #23

SENSATION COMICS

Life lessons

While many of her early adventures involved war saboteurs and the rescue of Etta Candy and the Holiday girls from various perilous traps, Wonder Woman took time to present lessons geared to her young readers, including *Sensation* #23's anti-bullying story.

image © 1943 DC

Amazing Adventures
CONTINUED

UNSLABBED Near Mint
7 14
8 22
9-10 20
11 150
➥1st blue Beast
12-13 30
14 25
15-17 20
18 14
19-25 5
26-28 4
29 5
30-36 3
36/30¢ 20
37 8
37/30¢ 20
38-39 3

Amazing Fantasy
MARVEL, 1962

UNSLABBED Near Mint
15 32000
➥1st Spider-Man
16-18 5

Amazing Spider-Man
MARVEL, 1963

UNSLABBED Near Mint
-1 3
1 27000
➥1st Chameleon
1/Golden 200
2 3400
➥1st Vulture
3 4600
➥1st Dr. Octopus
4 2300
➥1st Sandman
5 2500
➥Dr. Doom app.
6 1650
➥1st Lizard
7 1100
8 800
9 1025
➥1st Electro
10 990
11 1900
12 825
13 1200
➥1st Mysterio
14 2050
➥1st Green Goblin
15 1800
➥1st Kraven
16-17 800
➥2nd Green Goblin
18 510
➥1st Ned Leeds
19 460
20-21 510
22 425
23 510
24-25 500
26 550
27 500
28 450
29-30 240
31 325
32 175
33 140
34 240
35-36 225
37 250
38 195
39 350
➥1st Romita Spidey
40 375
➥Goblin origin
41 300
➥1st Rhino
42 185
➥1st view of MJ
43 120
44 175
45 115
46 250
➥1st Shocker
47 105
48 120
49 125
50 625
➥Spidey quits
51 200
52 150
53 105
54-55 110
56 90
57 80
58 100
59 70
60 105
61 72
62 75
63 160
➥vs. both Vultures
64 60
65 55
66 80
➥1st Randy
67-68 60
69 75
70-71 70
72 85
73 50
74 80
75-77 65
78 70
79-80 60
81 55
82-83 50
84-85 55
86 60
87 75
88 60
89 70
90 75
91 50
92 62
93 80
94 65
95 52
96 85
97 72
98 80
99 60
100 100
101 130
102 105
➥Morbius origin
103 50
104 90
105 25
106 40
107-108 27
109-110 30
111 34
112 30
113 35
114 50
115 33
116 22
117 25
118 22
➥vs. Hulk
119-120 50
➥vs. Hulk
121-122 150
➥Green Goblin dies
123 35
124 42
125 30
126 18
127 25
128 20
129 225
➥1st Punisher
129/Ace 6
130 20
131 25
➥Uncle Doc Ock
132 22
133 16
134 28
➥2nd Punisher
135 45
136 60
➥Harry as Goblin II
137 25
138 15
139 19
140 17
141 15
142 18
143 15
144 17
145-146 15
147 14
148 25
149 27
➥Spider-clone dies
150 16
151 24
152 11
153-154 10
155 12
155/30¢ 20
156 12
156/30¢ 20
157 12
157/30¢ 40
158 10
158/30¢ 20
159 11
➥vs. Doc Ock
159/30¢ 20
160 9
161 12
162 11
163 10
164 12
165-166 9
167-168 7
169 10
169/35¢ 15
170 7
170/35¢ 15
171 7
171/35¢ 15
172 8
172/35¢ 15
173 18
173/35¢ 25
174-175 10
176-177 12
➥1st Hamilton Goblin
178-180 11
181 9
182 8
183 7
184 8
185 7
186-187 8
188 7
189 6
190 7
191-193 6
194 21
➥1st Black Cat
195 10
196-198 6
199 7
200 10
201 9
202 7
203 6
204 8
205-206 6
207 5
208-211 6
212-218 5
219-220 6
221-222 4
223 5
224-225 4
226 7
227 6
228 4
229 11
230-232 6
233 4
234 6
235 4
236-237 5
238 22
➥1st Hobgoblin
239 10
240 5
241 4
242 5
243 6
244-245 5
246-248 4
249 5
250-251 6
252 10
➥1st black costume
253-254 5
255-258 4
259-263 5
264-265 4
266-267 3
268-270 4
271 5
272-273 4
274-276 5
277-279 4
280-284 5
285 6
286 4
287 5
288-289 6
290-293 5
294-295 6
296 5
297 6
298 16
➥McFarlane starts
299 9
➥Venom cameo
300 35
➥1st Venom
301 6
302 4
303 5
304-307 4
308 5
309 4
310-313 5
314 4
315-316 5
317-318 6
319 5
320 3
321 4
322 5
323 3
324 5
325-327 4
328 5
329 4
330-343 3
344 4
➥1st Cletus Kassidy
345-347 3
348-353 2
354 3
355-357 2
358 6
359 2
360 3
361 6
➥1st Carnage
362 25
➥2nd Carnage
363 4
364 3
365 4
366-369 2
370 3
371-373 2
374 3
375 5
376 4
377 3
378 4
379 5
380 3
381 4
382-388 3
388/Variant 2
389-394 3
394/Variant 4
395-399 3
400 5
➥no overlay
400/Gray 6
➥gray overlay
400/White 30
➥white overlay
401-432 2
432/Variant 5
433-441 2
500 5
501 4
502 3
503-509 2
509/DirCut 7
➥Director's Cut
510 4
511 3
512 5
513 3
514-520 2
521-528 3
529 15
530 12
531 10
532 12
533-535 3
Ann 1 700
➥1st Sinister Six
Ann 2 550
Ann 3 140
Ann 4 90
Ann 5 75
Ann 6-7 35
Ann 8-9 22
Ann 10-12 8
Ann 13 7

RETROVIEW
Amazing Spider-Man #14 ★★★

"A Surfeit of Spiders"

The villainous Spider-Woman attacks Peter Parker and Mattie Franklin, the latest heroic Spider-Woman.

Just in case anyone forgot about the latest Spider-Woman, here she teams with Spider-Man to face Charlotte Witter, transformed into a power-siphoning villain by Doc Ock. And, if that summary doesn't do it for you, Peter recalls the origins of both Spider-Women during the story.

Marvel
Feb 2000 • 22 pp.
Writers: John Byrne
Pencils: Byrne
Inks: Dan Green
Cover: Byrne

Mattie's reactions to the alleged death of Mary Jane are logical and it's been obvious for a while that she's taken with Spider-Man, but coming on to a guy who's possibly just lost his wife is a little much, don't you think?

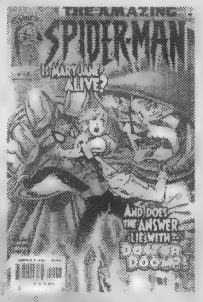
© Marvel

Best CGC copy: **9.8** **Then $1.99 NOW $2**

Anti-bully story ▼ Train cover ▼ Little people ▼

	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
	NOV 43	DEC 43	JAN 44	FEB 44	MAR 44	APR 44	MAY 44	JUN 44	JUL 44
NM Price	$840	$840	$840	$840	$840	$840	$840	$840	$610

Amazing Spider-Man #15 ★★



© Marvel

Marvel
Mar 2000 • 22 pp.
Writers: Howard Mackie, John Byrne
Pencils: Byrne
Inks: Dan Green
Cover: Byrne

"We're All Doomed ... Again!"

Spider-Man travels to Latveria in search of Mary Jane, only to encounter Doctor Doom.

It's fun to see another one of Peter's cost-saving airline trips, this time to Latveria. But why are there international flights to that dictator-run country?

Spidey's search is fruitless, at least in this issue. To find out how it comes out, readers had to pick up a copy of *Peter Parker, Spider-Man* #15. Sigh. Yes, cross-promotion of titles is all well and good, but what about folks who only ordered *Amazing* that month and couldn't get a copy of *Peter Parker*? And, there's another PSA insert in the middle of this issue.

Best CGC copy: **9.8** **Then $1.99 NOW $2**

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Ann 14	.6
Ann 15	.7
Ann 16	.5
Ann 17-21	.4
➥Spidey marries	
Ann 21/Direct	.5
Ann 22	.5
Ann 23-25	.3
Ann 26	.4
Ann 27-28	.3
Ann 1996	.4
Ann 1997	.3
Ashcan 1	.1
Amazing Spider-Man	
MARVEL, 1999	
1 (442)	.7
1/DF Romita	.12
1/DF Lee	.35
1/DF	.5
1/Authentix	.8
1/Sunburst	.18
2	.3
3-11	.2
12	.3
13-17	.2
18-19	.3
20	.5
21-24	.2
25	.3
25/Speckle	.4
26-29	.2
30	.5
➥Straczynski starts	
31	.3
32-33	.4
34	.5
35	.4
36	.9
36/DF	.20
➥9/11 issue	
37	.5
38	.4
39	.3
40	.2
41	.4
42-43	.3
44-49	.2
50	.6
51-56	.2
57-58	.3
Ann 1999	.5
Ann 2000	.4
Ann 2001	.3

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
America's Best Comics	
NEDOR, 1942	
1	.1600
2	.850
3	.600
4-6	.440
7	.575
8-10	.400
11-20	.360
21-24	.325
25-31	.265
America's Greatest Comics	
FAWCETT, 1941	
1	.1900
2	.900
3	.675
4-5	.500
6-8	.450
Animal Comics	
DELL, 1942	
1	.900
2	.450
3	.340
4	.150
5	.300
6-7	.135
➥War bonds cover	
8-10	.225
11-15	.170
16-20	.130
21-25	.105
26-30	.80
Animal Man	
DC, 1988	
1	.4
2	.3
3-49	.2
50	.3
51-55	.2
56	.4
57-89	.2
Ann 1	.4
Annihilation	
MARVEL, 2006	
1-2	.3
Ant	
ARCANA, 2004	
1	.10

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1/Red foil	.35
2-3	.5
3/Variant	.6
Ant	
IMAGE, 2005	
1	.5
1/Sketch	.3
1/RRP	.20
1/Conv	.15
2	.0
3-8	.3
Anthro	
DC, 1968	
1	.50
2-6	.20
Aquaman	
DC, 1962	
1	.900
2	.275
3-5	.150
6-10	.90
11	.125
➥1st Mera	
12-17	.75
18	.90
➥Weds Mera	
19-28	.60
29	.75
➥1st Ocean Master	
30	.50
31	.45
32	.50
33-34	.45
35-41	.40
42-43	.30
44-46	.25
47	.40
48-49	.25
50	.75
51	.50
52	.40
53-58	.20
59-63	.10
Archie	
ARCHIE, 1942	
1	.12200
2	.3325
3	.2175
4	.1100
5	.1000
6	.740
7-9	.660
10	.585
11-15	.475

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
16-20	.400
21-24	.325
25-30	.275
31-35	.220
36-40	.175
41-50	.125
51-60	.110
61-70	.70
71-80	.56
81-90	.44
91-99	.34
100	.55
101-120	.22
121-140	.16
141-150	.13
151-180	.9
181-200	.5
201-250	.3
251-569	.2
Ann 1	.1350
Ann 2	.660
Ann 3	.475
Ann 4	.345
Ann 5	.285
Ann 6	.180
Ann 7	.160
Ann 8	.135
Ann 9	.120
Ann 10	.110
Ann 11	.70
Ann 12	.60
Ann 13	.58
Ann 14-15	.50
Ann 16-17	.26
Ann 18-19	.22
Ann 20	.14
Ann 21-22	.9
Ann 23-26	.8
Army at War	
DC, 1978	
1	.10
Army of Darkness	
DARK HORSE, 1992	
1	.12
2-3	.9
Arrgh!	
MARVEL, 1974	
1	.15
2	.4
3-5	.3

I've Been Slabbed!

***Steve Mortensen*, Colossus Comics**

More famous firsts

Over the past few months I've noticed CGC-graded back issues are commanding higher prices, especially the first appearances of characters from The Bronze Age. Such heroes as Power Girl, Iron Fist, Luke Cage, Booster Gold, The Question, Son of Satan, Ghost Rider, Punisher, Blade, Paladin, and Moon Knight made their first appearances during the 1970s (with the exception of The Question — 1967 and Booster Gold — 1986). Most of these characters are now taking center stage in *Civil War*, *52*, and DC's re-launching of *JSA* and *JLA*. With *52* and *Justice League*, DC is taking secondary characters and making them into main characters. Animal Man, Adam Strange, Booster Gold, and The Question are critical to the storyline of *52*. In *Justice League*, Red Tornado has been the featured hero in the first three issues. On Marvel's side, the New Warriors' involvement in the tragedy that ignited *Civil War* made Speedball into a condemned criminal and one of the players featured in *Civil War: Front Line*. I've really enjoyed this past year in comics and I hope there's more surprises in the near future.

This month's CGC 9.8 picks:

***Hellstorm: Son of Satan* #1.** Both Marvel and DC have embraced the horror genre this year. Marvel released *Ghost Rider, Marvel Zombies*, and *Blade* and DC has released *Texas Chainsaw Massacre, Nightmare on Elm Street*, and *Toe Tags*. After revamping Ghost Rider, Marvel is now reviving Damian Hellstorm, the Son of Satan in a new mini-series. The regular covers are painted by legendary artist Arthur Suydam, who also painted the covers for *Marvel Zombies*. *Hellstorm* #1 also has a Mark Texeira 1:10 variant cover. See *Ghost Rider* #2 and *Marvel Spotlight* #12 for the first appearance of Son of Satan.

***Justice Society of America* #1.** Justice Society has a new series beginning from #1 written by Geoff Johns. The first issue will feature cover art by Alex Ross which should help boost the demand for the book in CGC 9.8. There's also a variant cover by interior artist Dale Eaglesham. Power Girl will assume a leadership role in the group. The first appearance of Power Girl continues to be a hot commodity (*All Star Comics* #58, Feb 76). Ungraded copies are selling in Near Mint for about $100 and CGC 9.6s are selling between $260 and $430. From the information on the CGC census, there's only one 9.8 copy in existence. It changed hands back in September of 2004 for $120 but I would expect that in today's market it would bring $500 to $600 due to her prominent role in *Infinite Crisis*, *JSA Classified*, and this new *JSA* series. Also see *Showcase* #97-99 for additional early appearances. (Her origin issues are *Showcase* #97 and #98.)

***Punisher War Journal* #1.** This is the launching of a new ongoing Punisher series. If that weren't enough, the book is also a "Civil War" tie-in. There is a color version of the comic and a black and white version. Rather than producing a variant, Marvel decided to give retailers the option to buy as many copies of each version as they wanted but that makes it hard to tell which book will be more valuable. My hunch is that more retailers will order the color version thus making the black and white version harder to find.

***What If? Spider-Man: The Other*.** The book has an interesting premis: What if Spider-Man became more spider than human? The cover features Spider-Man in his black costume emerging from Leonardo DaVinci's sepia tone sketch of "The Proportions of the Human Figure." It's a dynamic cover and I think that alone will make it a big draw for Spider-Man collectors.

***Steve Mortensen** owns Colossus Comics (**www.colossuscomics.com**), which offers a CGC 9.8 subscription service and CGC 9.8 pre-orders for new comics. He can be reached at **steve@colossuscomics.com**.*

	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44
		Halloween cover	Sargon begins				Christmas cover			Red Cross appeal		Whip appears	
	AUG 44	SEP 44	OCT 44	NOV 44	DEC 44	JAN 45	FEB 45	MAR 45	APR 45	MAY 45	JUN 45	JUL 45	AUG 45
NM Price	$610	$610	$610	$580	$560	$580	$560	$560	$560	$495	$495	$495	$495

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CGC 9.6 (NM+) is **1.5 times** CGC 9.4
CGC 8.0 (VF) is **1/5 (20%)** of CGC 9.4

The Five Fists of Science

"Come witness the power of science to enforce a Compulsion for Peace!"

Or so Mark Twain, Nikola Tesla, and Baroness Bertha Von Suttner believe. Fresh from a council on world disarmament, Twain is frustrated. The Tsar's plea for peace is ignored, while President McKinley, The Kaiser, Queen Victoria, and the other leaders vie for power in the new post-Boer War world.

IMAGE
WRITER:
MATT FACTION
ARTIST:
STEVEN SANDERS
COLOR • 112 PGS.
$12.99

What a grand scheme! Peace by compulsion. With Twain at the PR helm, Tesla on the science end, and Baroness Suttner their ideological anchor, how can it fail? With Andrew Carnegie, J.P. Morgan, and Thomas Edison struggling to build the Innsbruck and fighting Twain every step of the way, deaths mounting, and black magic, The Five Fists of Science must triumph over evil to save the world!

Wow. This is an ambitious story. However, with so many players and such a complex plot, it becomes convoluted, and even the art by Steven Sanders (as good as it is) fails to turn this into a better novel.

★★ — **Tim Lasiuta**

www.imagecomics.com
ISBN: 1-58240-605-7

Astonishing Tales
MARVEL, 1970
UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 40
2-5 20
6 12
7-8 15
9 10
10 20
11 10
12 30
➥Man-Thing story
13-20 10
21 25
22 10
23 15
24 10
25 25
➥1st Deathlok
26 10
27-29 7
30-32 5
33 10
34 6
35 7
➥Low distribution
35/30¢ 20
36 10
➥Low distribution
36/30¢ 20

Astonishing X-Men
MARVEL, 2004
1 8
➥Whedon starts
1/Cassaday 45
1/Del Otto 12
1/DirCut 5
1/DF 8
2 16
3 4
4 8
4/Variant 25
➥Colossus cover
5 8
6 5
7 4
8-10 3
10/Variant 5
11-17 3

Astro Boy
GOLD KEY, 1965
1 265

Atom
DC, 1962
1 750
2 300
3 225
4-5 175
6 125
7 250
➥Hawkman app.
8 125
9 90
10-13 85
14 95
➥Hawkman app.
15 85
16-17 45
18 50
19 45
20 60
21-23 35
24 40
25 50
26-28 35
29 100
30 55
31 48
32 35
33 40
34-35 35
36-37 45
38 30
Special 1-2 3

Atom and Hawkman
DC, 1968
39-41 30
42 35
43-45 30

Avengers
MARVEL, 1963
0 3
1 4200
➥1st Avengers
1.5 3
2 935
3 750
4 1450
➥Cap. America joins
4/Golden 40
5 350
6 390
7 460
8 275
9 225
➥1st Wonder Man
10 180
➥1st Hercules
11 275
➥Spider-Man app.
12 115
13-14 150
15 100
16 125
17 115
18 100
19 150
20 80
21-22 70
23 75
24 70
25 95
26 65
27 70
28-30 50
31 43
32 37
33 50
34 55
35 50
36 35
37 40
38 43
39-41 40
42 50
43 45
44 40
45 50
46 30
47-48 37
49 32
50 30
51 40
52 41
53 60
➥X-Men app.
54-55 30
56 50
57 110
➥1st Vision
58 65
59-60 40
61-66 30
67 45
68 27
69-70 30
71 50
72-73 30
74-76 25
77 20
78 25
79-81 23
82 26
83 36
➥1st Valkyrie
84 23
85-86 25
87 40
88 25
89 20
90-91 22
92 26
93 120
➥Double-size
94 35
95 38
96 35
97-98 26
99 30
100 55
➥Knight gets sword
101 18
102 16
103 40
➥Sentinels
104 20
105 18
106 17
107 20
108 12
109 18
110 25
111 22
112 25
113 11
114 15
115 13
116 27
➥Defenders War
117 20
118 24
119 15
120 14
121 10
122 13
123 9
124 12
125 20
126 18
127-129 12
130 15
131 12
132 10
133 8
134-135 10
136-137 8
138-140 7
141 10
142-145 8
146 10
146/30¢ 20
147 7
147/30¢ 20
148 12
148/30¢ 18
149 6
149/30¢ 15
150 7
150/30¢ 15
151 7
152-155 6
156 9
157 6
158-159 8
160 6
160/35¢ 15
161 7
161/35¢ 15
162 8
162/35¢ 15
163 7
163/35¢ 15
164 6
164/35¢ 15
165-166 6
167 5
168 7
169-170 4
171 6
172-174 4
175 5
176-180 4
181 5
182 4
183-184 6
185 7
186 5
187-189 6
190 4
191-195 5
196 7
197-199 5
200 9
➥Double-size
201-218 3
219-224 2
225 3
226-249 2
250 3
251-262 2
263 3
264-349 2
350 3
351-359 1
360 3
361-362 1
363 3
364-365 1
366 4
➥Foil cover
367-368 1
369 3
370-374 1
375 2
375/Collector's 3
376-379 2
379/Double 3
380 2
380/Double 3
381 2
381/Double 3
382 2
382/Double 3
383-399 2
400 4
401-402 3
Ann 1 125
Ann 2 120
Ann 3-4 22
Ann 5 25
Ann 6 7
Ann 7 12
Ann 8-9 8
Ann 10 9
Ann 11-16 4
Ann 17-23 3

Avengers
MARVEL, 1996
1-1/A 3
2-11 2
12 3
13 2

Avengers
MARVEL, 1998
0 2
1 4
1/Chromium 6
1/RoughCut 4
2-5 3
6-11 2
12 3
12/DF 12
12/White 5
13-16 2
16/A 4
17-24 2
25 3
26 2
27 3
28-33 2
34 3
35-47 2
48 4
49 2
50 3
51-80 2
81-82 3
83-84 2
500 12
➥Disassembled
500/DirCut 18
501 5
➥Disassembled
502 7
➥Hawkeye dies
503 4
Ann '98 3
Ann '99-'00 4
Ann '01 3

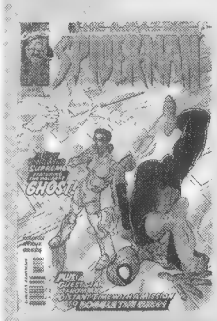
Avengers Finale
MARVEL, 2005
1 4

Avengers Forever
MARVEL, 1998
1 3
1/WF 5
2-12 3

Avengers/JLA
DC, 2003
2 7
4 6

Avengers West Coast
MARVEL, 1989
47-55 1
56 8
➥Psycho Scarlet Witch
57-74 1
75 2
76-102 1
Ann 4-7 2
Ann 8 3

RETROVIEW
Amazing Spider-Man #16 ★★★



Marvel
Apr 2000 • 21 pp.
Writers: Howard Mackie, John Byrne
Pencils: Byrne
Inks: Dan Green
Cover: Byrne

"Coming Home"

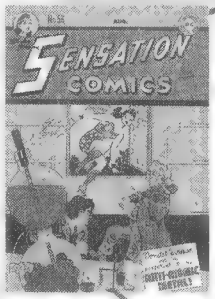
After returning from Latveria, Peter Parker finds himself out of his apartment, his job, and his freelance work.

Yes, it's time to make Peter Parker's life as miserable as possible. It's not enough that Mary Jane is missing and presumed dead, now her manager has embezzled her money, Peter and Aunt May are forced out of the penthouse apartment, and Peter loses all his income-generating gigs. And it's only going to get worse.

On the plus side, John Byrne and Howard Mackie skillfully tie events here into Byrne's maxi-series *Marvel: The Lost Generation* with a visit from the time-traveling Cassandra Locke.

© Marvel

Last price: 9.2 — Then $1.99 — NOW $2



△ #56

SENSATION COMICS

That Kubert kid

Artist Joe Kubert, who would later be better-known for his war comics, had various super-hero assignments at DC, including several back-up features in *Sensation*.

His Sargon the Sorcerer stories appeared in #56 and #57, while a Wildcat piece was in #66.

Image © 1946 DC

THE BOTTOM LINE

	Western cover		"Midget Mystery"				Black Pirate ends		
NM Price	45 SEP 45 $495	46 OCT 45 $495	47 NOV 45 $495	48 DEC 45 $495	49 JAN 46 $495	50 FEB 46 $495	51 MAR 46 $455	52 APR 46 $455	53 MAY 46 $455

Amazing Spider-Man #17 ★★★★

© Marvel

"Dust in the Wind"

Peter's attempts to get to his latest job interview keep getting sidetracked.

John Byrne and Howard Mackie have really hit their stride with this story arc, combining slice of life stories with the super-hero action longtime Spider-Man readers have come to expect. It may be predictable in spots, but that's part of the fun. At its core, it's what keeps the Spider-Man stories going, making Peter identifiable with his readers.

The disintegrating Sandman is pretty gross and the redesigned Electro costume just doesn't work. Without Doc Ock leading the group, The Sinister Six never have a chance at working together.

Marvel
May 2000 • 22 pp.
Writers: John Byrne, Howard Mackie
Pencils: Byrne
Inks: Dan Green
Cover: Byrne

Hot CGC copy: **9.4** **Then $1.99 NOW $2**

CBG Trendwatcher

John Tinkess, Another Dimension

HEATING UP

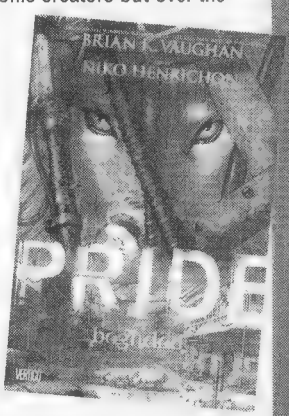
Shipping delays seemed to have little effect on the demand for *Civil War* as it remained our best-selling comic book again this month and all tie-in issues continued to sell well. DC actually had more books in our Top 20 list than Marvel this month though, as new issues of *Justice* and *All-Star Superman* finally arrived and *52*, *Justice League of America*, and *Teen Titans* continue to sell very well. *Trials of Shazam* also got off to a strong start and interest in *Batman* and *Detective Comics* remains high due to writers Grant Morrison and Paul Dini, respectively.

COOLING DOWN

With so many great books being released, fans often have to make difficult choices due to a lack of time and/or money, and as a result we're seeing sales softening a bit on some of the mid-range selling titles like *Blue Beetle*, *Aquaman*, *Nightwing*, *Excalibur*, and *Iron Man*. Interest is also waning in *JLA Classified* and *JSA Classified*. As often happens with anthologies like these, the first couple of story arcs are done by high-profile creators but over the long run that level of quality is hard to maintain.

LOOK AGAIN

Pride of Baghdad was far and away our best-selling graphic novel this month and even sold more in dollars than *Civil War*. This amazing book by Brian K. Vaughan and Niko Henrichon, based on a true story about a pride of lions that escapes from a zoo during a bombing raid in Iraq, is sure to be nominated for many industry awards next year and is a must-read for any discerning comics fan.



Recent back issue sales (all unslabbed):

Uncanny X-Men #96 VF+ $70
Uncanny X-Men #97 VF+ $70
Uncanny X-Men #109 VG+ $16
Uncanny X-Men #114 VG/F $15

House Picks

A sense of Justice, Part 2

1. ***Justice Society* Vol. 1 TPB.** (Collects the first half of the 1970s JSA revival.)
2. ***Power Girl* TPB.** (Collects *JSA Classified* #1-4.)
3. ***JSA: The Golden Age.*** (An Elseworlds tale by James Robinson and Paul Smith.)
4. ***JLA/JSA Virtue and Vice.*** (The first modern JLA/JSA team-up by Geoff Johns, David Goyer, and Carlos Pacheco.)
5. ***All-Star Comics Archives.*** (Collects the team's original Golden Age adventures.)

John Tinkess *runs* ***Another Dimension*** *in Calgary, Alberta. He can be reached at* ***comics@another-dimension.com*** *or* ***(403) 283-7078.***

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Batgirl	
DC, 2000	
1	.4
1/2nd	.3
2-5	.4
6-73	.3
Ann 1	.4
Batman	
DC, 1940	
0	.3
1	.80000
➥1st Catwoman	
2	.15000
3	.9750
4	.7500
5	.5500
➥1st Batmobile	
6-7	.4500
8	.4000
9	.3750
10	.7500
11	.4750
12	.2900
➥1st Batcave	
13-14	.2775
15	.2625
16	.4600
➥1st Alfred	
17-20	.1650
21-22	.1275
23	.2000
24	.1275
25	.2050
26-30	.1275
31-36	.950
37	.1200
38	.1000
39	.950
40	.1140
41-43	.760
44	.1080
45-46	.760
47	.3000
➥Batman origin	
48	.965
49	.1350
➥1st Mad Hatter	
50-51	.690
52	.850
53-54	.690
55	.850
56-57	.690
58	.750
59-61	.690
62	.1250
➥Catwoman origin	
63	.575
64	.515
65	.575
66	.660
➥vs. Joker	
67-68	.515
69	.575
70-72	.515
73	.660
74	.550
75-77	.500
78	.585
79-80	.500
81	.485
82-83	.435
84	.485
85-90	.435
91-99	.400
100	.2000
➥Anniversary issue	
101-104	.400
105	.490
106-109	.400
110	.425
111-120	.290
121	.375
➥1st Mr. Freeze	
122	.225
123	.220
124-126	.195
127	.240
➥vs. Joker	
128	.195
129	.250
➥Robin origin	
130	.195
131	.145
132-135	.130
136	.215
➥vs. Joker	
137-145	.140
146-147	.110
148	.140
➥vs. Joker	
149-150	.110
151	.90
152	.100
153	.125
154	.85
155	.300
➥1st SA Penguin	
156-164	.85
165	.130
166-168	.85
169	.90
170	.85
171	.450
➥1st SA Riddler	
172	.125
173-175	.75
176	.85
177	.75
178	.85
179	.120
➥vs. Riddler	
180	.60
181	.175
➥1st Poison Ivy	
182-185	.60
186	.70
187	.65
188	.40
189	.250
➥1st SA Scarecrow	
190	.45
191	.40
192	.60
193	.70
194	.80
195-196	.40
197	.100
➥Catwoman app.	
198	.85
199	.40
200	.100
➥Robin origin	
201-202	.35
203-204	.30
205	.40
206	.30
207-208	.50
209-212	.30
213	.45
214-217	.30
218	.70
➥Giant-size	
219	.50
220-221	.30
222	.75
223	.40
224-226	.30
227	.50
228	.40
229-231	.30
232	.350
➥1st Ra's al Ghul	
233	.30
234	.115
➥1st SA Two-Face	
235	.17
236	.25
237	.75
➥1st Reaper	
238	.65
➥100 pages	
239-240	.17
241	.30
242	.17
243	.70
➥vs. Ra's al Ghul	
244	.65
➥vs. Ra's al Ghul	
245	.70
246-247	.15
248	.20
249-250	.15
251	.60
➥vs. Joker	
252	.14
253	.26
254-255	.32
256-258	.35
259-261	.32
262-263	.15
264-266	.9
267-285	.8
286	.12
➥vs. Joker	
287-290	.9
291	.12
292-294	.9
295-299	.8
300	.15
301-331	.7
332	.8
333-352	.7
353	.5
354-356	.7
357	.9
358-367	.7
368	.8
369-370	.6
371-399	.5
400	.10
401-403	.4
404	.5
405	.6
406-408	.5
409-416	.3
417	.5
418-420	.4
421-425	.3
426-427	.6
427/Direct	.4
428	.6
429	.4
430	.3
431-435	.2
436	.3
437-441	.2
442	.3
443-456	.2
457	.3

Text — Fights insects — Joe Kubert art on Sargon — Baseball cover — Tennis cover — Mr. Terrific ends — Joe Kubert on Wildcat

	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66
	JUN 46	JUL 46	AUG 46	SEP 46	OCT 46	NOV 46	DEC 46	JAN 47	FEB 47	MAR 47	APR 47	MAY 47	JUN 47
NM Price	$455	$455	$455	$455	$455	$455	$455	$395	$395	$395	$395	$395	$395

PRICE GUIDE KEY:
OTHER CGC GRADES

Slabbed CGC 9.8 (NM/M) is **3 times** the CGC 9.4 price above
CGC 9.0 (VF/NM) is **2/5 (40%)** of CGC 9.4
CGC 9.6 (NM+) is **1.5 times** CGC 9.4
CGC 8.0 (VF) is **1/5 (20%)** of CGC 9.4

Four Stories

A nice mini-comic anthology that features, in part, the art of Eric Adams from *Lackluster World.*

"Integral" is a short story about the father of a young girl that stops a mugging in a busy subway. He may or may not have superpowers — it's unclear.

CHRIS ARRANT
WRITER:
CHRIS ARRANT
ARTISTS:
VARIOUS
B/W • 28 Pgs.
FREE

In "Passenger," a man, depressed about his ex-girlfriend, dreams about her. The ex-girlfriend shows up in the dream to help the man.

In "Snow Blind," two coworkers drive down a snowy road after an office party and discover that their world is not what it seems.

In "Stuart," illustrated by Adams, a friendly little self-sufficient boy wanders around a hospital doing good deeds.

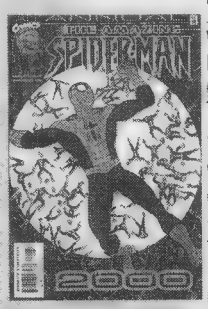
The stories are short so telling you any more details would probably give them away.

"Passenger" was the only one I didn't really get, but I didn't mind it. All in all, it's a nice anthology and I would like to see more. There's no price on this and that's a shame. I wouldn't mind paying a buck for it. Publishers, please price your comics, at least so we critics know what to tell people.

★★★ — **Tony DiGerolamo**

www.chrisarrant.com

RETROVIEW
Amaz. Spider-Man 2000 ★★★½



"Old Acquaintances" • 31 pp.

With the aid of Harry Osborn, Spider-Man rescues Normie Osborn from a group of Scriers.

No, it's not a story set in the past, but there is a ret-con flashback in it with Peter recalling his high school days with Harry. That's difficult to believe, since Harry wasn't introduced to the series until Peter was in college.

The Harry hologram is a neat concept and, hopefully, one that others will use in future issues.

"Betrayal!" • 8 pp.

Back to his villainous ways, The Sandman faces Silver Sable and The Wild Pack.

Sandman stories are always fun.

Marvel • 2000
Writers: Howard Mackie, Gregory Wright
Pencils: Klaus Janson, Andy Kuhn
Inks: Harry Candelario
Cover: Uncredited

© Marvel

Big Chic copy 9.8 **Then $3.50 NOW $4**

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Batman
CONTINUED
457/Direct. 4
458-486 2
487 1
488-492 3
492/Silver 5
493 3
494-496 2
497 3
498-500 2
500/Collector's ...4
501-515 2
515/Variant 4
516-530 2
530/Variant 3
531 2
531/Variant 3
532 2
532/Variant 3
533-535 2
535/Variant 4
536-549 2
550 3
550/Variant 4
551-562 2
563-564 3
565-599 2
600 4
601-607 2
608 5
➥Jim Lee begins
609 4
610-619/2nd ..3
620-629 2
630 3
631-632 2
633 3
634 6
635 15
➥Red Hood
636-637 12
638 11
638/2nd 6
639 16
640-641 6
642-643 3
644 2
645-650 3
651 6
652-657 3
1000000 4
Ann 1 540
Ann 2 275
Ann 3 215
Ann 4-5 110
Ann 6-7 85
Ann 8 7
Ann 9-11 6
Ann 12-13 5
Ann 14-15 3
Ann 15/Silver ...4
Ann 16-18 3
Ann 19 4
Ann 20 3
Ann 21 4
Ann 22-23 3
Ann 24 4
Ann 25 12
GS 1-2 5
GS 3 6

Battlestar Galactica
MARVEL, 1979
1 4
4-10 3
11-23 2

Beatles
DELL, 1964
1 440

Beowulf
DC, 1975
1 5
2 3
3-6 2

Beware (Trojan)
TROJAN, 1953
13 (1) 400
14 (2) 250
15 (3)-16 (4) 200
5-13 175
14-15 150

Beware
MARVEL, 1973
1 8
2-8 5

Beware the Creeper
DC, 1968
1 45
2-5 32
6 55

Big All-American Comic Book
DC, 1944
1 6500

Bionic Woman
CHARLTON, 1977
1 14
2-5 6

Birds of Prey
DC, 1999
1 4
2-7 3
8 12
➥Nightwing app.
9-75 3
76 15
➥1st Black Alice
77-98 3

Black Goliath
MARVEL, 1976
1 11
2 5
2/30¢ 20
3 4
3/30¢ 20
4 4
4/30¢ 20
5 4

Blackhawk
DC, 1944
9 2600
10 1100
11 900
12-15 800
16-20 525
21-25 460
26-30 400
31-35 350
36-40 300
41-49 225
50 200
51-60 165
61-70 145
71 200
72-80 130
81-86 125
87-92 120
93 135
94-99 110
100 140
101-107 105
108 325
➥1st DC issue
109 130
110-117 110
118 135
119-130 85
131-140 65
141-149 50
150-163 48
164 60
165-166 48
167-180 22
181-200 16
201-227 15
228 30
229-243 15
244-260 4
261-273 3

Blitzkrieg
DC, 1976
1 16
2 8
3-5 6

Bomba
DC, 1967
1 16
2-7 8

Bone
CARTOON BOOKS, 1991
1 80
2 45
3 25
4 16
5 12
6-8 7
9-13 5
13.5/Gold 4
14-55 3
Special 1 2

Boy Comics
LEV GLEASON, 1942
3 1500
4 1100
5 575
6 950
➥Iron Jaw origin
7 620
8 515
9 450
10 615
11-14 350
15 400
16 225
17 250
18-20 200
21-25 140
26-29 130
30 200
➥Crimebuster origin
31-40 58
41-50 42
51-62 30
63-80 27
81-100 24
101-119 22

Boy Commandos
DC, 1942
1 4500
2 1500
3 1000
4-6 500
7-10 275
11-22 190
23 220
24-30 150
31-35 135
36 195

Brave and the Bold
DC, 1955
1 3000
2 1500
3 700
4-5 650
6-10 500
11-22 400
23 500
24 350
25 500
➥1st Suicide Squad
26 325
27 330
28 5000
➥1st JLA
29 2000
30 1750
31 350
32-33 200
34 1750
➥1st SA Hawkman
35-36 400
37 250
38-39 225
40-41 140
42 300
43 350
➥Hawkman origin
44 260
45-49 60
50 175
51 225
52 125
53 75
54 350
➥1st Teen Titans
55-56 45
57 150
➥1st Metamorpho
58 65
59 80
60 100
➥1st Wonder Girl
61 125
➥Starman origin
62 100
➥1st SA Wildcat
63 40
64 60
65-66 22
67 65
➥Batman starts
68 80
➥Batman Hulk parody
69-73 50
74 40
75 60
76 50
77-78 40
79 75
➥Batman, Deadman
80-82 50
83 60
84 50
85 60
➥N. Adams GA
86 50
87 26
88-90 20
91-92 18
93 30
94 18
95 24
96-98 15
99 22
100 30
101-102 15
103-110 12
111-114 18
115 22
116-118 18
119-126 7
127-128 6
129-130 11
131 6
132 4
133 5
134-140 4
141 10
142-179 4
180-190 3
191 8
192-196 3
197 4
198-199 3
200 7
Ann 1 6

Caliber Presents
CALIBER, 1989
1 15
➥1st Crow
2-7 3
8 2
9-24 3

Captain Action
DC, 1968
1 45
2-4 35
5 20

Captain America
MARVEL, 1968
100 210
101 55
102-108 35
109 45
➥Origin retold
110 75
➥Steranko begins
111 65
112 50
113 60
➥Avengers app.
114-116 30
117 95
➥1st Falcon
118-124 25
125-127 20
128-130 15
131-132 18
133 15
134-136 18

△ #68

SENSATION COMICS

A real tigress

One of Wildcat's foes, the original Huntress had her origin and first appearance in *Sensation Comics* #68 (Aug 47).

She would later team with Green Lantern foe The Sportsmaster in The Injustice Society of the World and the two eventually married.

image © 1947 DC

1st Huntress

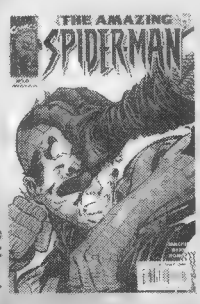
Magic cover

Shaggy the Leprechaun returns

	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
	JUL 47	AUG 47	SEP 47	OCT 47	NOV 47	DEC 47	JAN 48	FEB 48	MAR 48
NM Price	$395	$500	$395	$395	$380	$380	$380	$380	$380

THE BOTTOM LINE

Amazing Spider-Man #18 ★★★½



© Marvel

"Homeward Bound"

Spider-Man tangles with a new Green Goblin who's attempting to kidnap Liz Osborn.

For older Spider-fans, this issue is a real treat with John Romita inking John Byrne. The only drawback is that if readers were expecting to see Byrne's art, it's hard to find under Romita's inks. And why does Liz suddenly look like Gwen Stacy? Oh, that's right, Romita's blondes all look alike. (And that's not a bad thing, just disconcerting here.)

Peter Parker's bad luck continues here, but we don't learn why he's out of the low-rent apartment from last issue.

Marvel
Jun 2000 • 23 pp.
Writers: John Byrne, Howard Mackie
Pencils: Byrne
Inks: John Romita
Cover: Byrne

Last CGC copy: 9.6 **Then $2.25 NOW $3**

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
137	.35
138	.30
139-146	.25
147	.18
148	.16
149	.15
150	.25
151-153	.15
154-155	.25
156	.20
157-162	.10
163-164	.12
165-167	.10
168	.15
169	.10
170	.12
171-172	.10
173	.15
174	.12
175-176	.10
177-183	.8
184-187	.5
188	.8
189-196	.6
196/30¢	.20
197	.5
197/30¢	.20
198	.6
198/30¢	.20
199	.5
199/30¢	.20
200	.6
200/30¢	.20
201	.6
202	.4
203	.5
204-205	.4
206	.5
207	.4
208-209	.5
210	.4
210/35¢	.15
211	.4
211/35¢	.15
212	.4
212/35¢	.15
213	.4
213/35¢	.15
214	.4
214/35¢	.15
215-233	.4
234	.6
235-240	.4
241	.8
242-255	.4
256-271	.2
272	.3
273-275	.2
276	.4
277-281	.2
282	.3
283	.2
284	.3
285	.2
286-288	.3
289-297	.2
298	.3
299-331	.2
332	.3
333-349	.2
350	.3
351-382	.2
383	.3
384-399	.2
400	.3
401-420	.2
420/Collector's	.3
421-424	.2
425	.3
425/Variant	.4
426-443	.2
444	.3
445-447	.2
448	.3
449-454	.2
Ann 1	.35
Ann 2	.20
Ann 3-4	.8
Ann 5-7	.3
Ann 8 ➡Wolverine app.	.12
Ann 9-13	.3
Ashcan 1	.1
Special 1-2	.4

Captain America
MARVEL, 1995

1	.3
1/Flag	.4
1/Conv	.5
2-13	.2
Ashcan 1	.1

Captain America
MARVEL, 1998

1	.4
1/Sunburst	.5
2	.3
2/Variant	.4
3-12	.2
12/Ltd.	.6
13-24	.2
25	.3
26-49	.2
50	.6
Ann '98-'00	.4
Ann '01	.3

Captain America
MARVEL, 2002

1	.4
2-32	.3

Captain America
MARVEL, 2005

1	.8
2-3	.5
4-5	.3
6	.7
6/Variant	.5
7	.3
8	.5
9-22	.3

Captain America & The Falcon
MARVEL, 2004

1-5	.3
6	.4
7-14	.3

Captain America Comics
MARVEL, 1941

1	.80000
2	.20000
3	.10000
4	.6500
5	.5500
6	.4750
7	.5500
8	.4000
9-10	.3600
11-12	.3100
13	.3275
14-15	.3100
16	.3600
17	.2585
18-20	.2075
21-22	.1850
22/A ➡GS issue	.12000
23-25	.1850
26-30	.1650
31-35	.1385
36	.1650
37	.1550
38-40	.1285
41-58	.1175
59 ➡Cap origin	.2650
60	.1175
61	.1850
62-65	.1075
66	.1400
67-70	.1175
71-73	.1025
74 ➡Cap Weird Tales	.4350
75	.2750
76-78	.875

Captain Atom
CHARLTON, 1965

78	.40
79-85	.25
86-89	.20

Captain Marvel
MARVEL, 1968

1	.60
2-3	.18
4	.24
5	.15
6	.30
7-8	.15
9	.25
10-15	.15
16	.25
17-24 ➡Thanos War starts	.22
25-27	.25
28	.30
29	.16
30	.12
31	.16
32-33	.12
34	.6
35-37	.3
38	.5
39-44	.3
44/30¢	.20
45	.3
45/30¢	.20
46-47	.3
48	.9
49	.3

CBG Trendwatcher

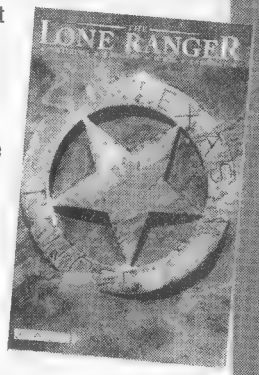
Jon Newman, Ultimate Comics

This month I decided to not bang in everyone's heads with how well *52* and *Civil War* are selling and talk only about titles that are easily outperforming original expectations.

On the Marvel side of things there is more going on than just the relaunch of '90s books. *Criminal* sold better for us than any Icon book had before, and sold better than almost any work by either creator. *Blade* seems to be doing well, despite the fact that most of our customers seem to not have liked the new TV show. *Beyond*, which is a sequal of sorts to *Secret Wars*, is a book that has crushed expectations around here. It has just sold and sold, going through reorder after reorder as people seem to really want more '80s-type books. Also, *Marvel Adventures Avengers* has been a big success thanks in part to the fact that Marvel put a brand new Avengers crew on it. Also on the young reader front *X-Men: First Class* has sold about twice as many copies as expected, due mostly to young readers wanting an accessible X-book that they can read, and these classic team stories are a great place to start. Watch out for *Marvel Adventures Spider-Man*, because Spidey's getting the black costume in it soon. This is a great way to boost the sales of children's comics, by making it different enough from the core titles that stores get some add-on from their mainstream collecters too. Hopefully DC will follow suit in its all-ages titles.

Speaking of DC, the only core title to sell more than we bargained for has been the unbelievable sales movement on *Batman*. We should have known, because it was clear that a good writer and artist was going to sell *Justice League of America*, so we should have known with *Batman. Mystery in Space* has been a mild surprise as well and the folks reading it are loving it. Most of DC's surprise success has come from Vertigo and WildStorm. *Boys* has sold *Batman*-like numbers and is approaching *52* numbers for us. *Gen 13* sold way more than we thought it would. *Pride of Baghdad* sold more copies than most $3 comics and it carried a $20 price tag. We have never moved as many of any trade or hardcover in a month as this. *Fables* has been picking up sales every few issues as people catch up to the single issues.

Another book adding new readers as the trades catch up to the singles has been *Walking Dead*. Every new arc seems to add 20 new readers at our stores, easy. *Elephantmen* has been selling well which is great because I loved it before it was a monthly and it's cool to see other people love it, too. *Cross Bronx* and *Sam Noir Samurai Detective* also enjoyed better sales than we thought.



Dark Horse's *Star Wars* and *Conan* books continue to rise in readership, due to the fact that they are some of the best licensed property comics ever.

On to the world of indies we find Dynamite Entertainment's brilliant *Lone Ranger* book selling better than many core Marvel and DC books. It was well worth the huge sales numbers too, as at the end of the book you wanted more, *now*.

House Picks

A sense of Justice, Part 2

1. ***JSA: Golden Age.*** A must-read book by James Robinson, one of the best trades on the market.
2. ***JSA: Liberty Files.*** A cool story and great Tony Harris art.
3. ***JSA: Black Reign.*** The storyline from the *JSA* run.
4. ***JSA: Return of Hawkman.***
5. ***JSA: Black Vengeance.*** This was worth it if only for the Alex Ross covers.

Jon Newman *is the manager of* ***Ultimate Comics*** *in Durham, N.C., which can be reached at* ***(919) 806-8282*** *or at* ***www.ultimatecomicsonline.com***

Boxing cover — Bondage cover — Cited in *Seduction of the Innocent* — Sargon ends — Atom appears — Hollywood story

	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88
	APR 48	MAY 48	JUN 48	JUL 48	AUG 48	SEP 48	OCT 48	NOV 48	DEC 48	JAN 49	FEB 49	MAR 49	APR 49
NM Price	$380	$380	$380	$380	$380	$425	$385	$385	$385	$385	$385	$385	$385

PRICE GUIDE KEY:
OTHER CGC GRADES

Slabbed CGC 9.8 (NM/M) is **3 times** the CGC 9.4 price above
CGC 9.0 (VF/NM) is **2/5 (40%)** of CGC 9.4
CGC 9.6 (NM+) is **1.5 times** CGC 9.4
CGC 8.0 (VF) is **1/5 (20%)** of CGC 9.4

Golgo 13 Vol. 2

The renowned manga sharpshooter returns in the second of 13 volumes of his "greatest hits" (pun intended). The first tale, circa 1990, recounts the 1989 Communist Chinese massacre at Beijing's Tiananmen Square. But did you know that a Tibetan revolutionary aimed to use this ill-fated democracy movement to advance the independence of his captive homeland, and our assassin must stop him first?

VIZ
WRITER:
TAKAO SAITO
ARTIST:
TAKAO SAITO
B/W • 192 Pgs.
~~$9.99~~

In the second mission, from 1974, "Mr. Togo" meets with the U.S. government in Tijuana and accepts the assignment to kill the Corsican mob's master heroin chemist "Doctor Z." He then travels to Marseilles, France, to infiltrate the gang and get intimate with the boss Madame Sandrine Salvi. But, when agent Sally Garland gets captured, how will Golgo finish the job?

Unfortunately, this hero hasn't aged as well as his inspiration, James Bond, over the past four decades. Exemplifying the dramatic *gekiga* style, this samurai with a six-shooter is all business with little humor, expression, or sensitivity. The series shows its senility, when it exploits true Chinese and Tibetan tragedies for strained melodrama.

★★ — **Oliver Chin**

www.viz.com
ISBN: 1-4215-0382-4

△ #107

SENSATION COMICS

From Wonder to Peril

As the 1950s began, Wonder Woman was one of the last DC super-heroes left on the newsstands. Her *Sensation* adventures ended with #106 (Nov 51) and Johnny Peril by Alex Toth began in #107, continuing his adventures from the short-lived *Danger Trail*.

image © 1952 DC

THE BOTTOM LINE

Captain Marvel CONTINUED
UNSLABBED Near Mint
50 10
51 4
52 3
52/35¢ 15
53-54 3
55 5
56 3
57 6
58-62 3

Captain Marvel Adventures FAWCETT, 1941
1 27500
2 3500
3 1800
4 1200
5 1050
6-7 750
8-10 675
11-15 590
16-17 550
18 1800
➥1st Mary Marvel
19-20 500
21-22 400
23 610
➥1st Mr. Mind
24-40 225
41 190
42 163
43-109 125
110-120 80
121 115
➥Cap Marvel origin
122-150 80

Captain Marvel Jr. FAWCETT, 1942
1 4000
2 1500
3 865
4 915
5 735
6-8 545
9-10 500
11-15 390
16-20 340
21-25 275
26-30 235
31-40 205
41-50 180
51-70 155
71-80 135
81-119 120

Capt. Storm DC, 1964
1 28
2-5 18
6 14
7-15 12
16-18 9

Cat MARVEL, 1972
1 35
2 15
3 12
4 10

Catwoman DC, 1989
1-2 3
3-4 2

Catwoman DC, 1993
0 2
1-10 3
11-50 2
50/A-50/B 3
51-94 2
1000000 3
Ann 1-2 4
Ann 3 3
Ann 4 4

Catwoman DC, 2002
1 4
2-59 3

Cerebus the Aardvark AARDVARK-VANAHEIM, 1977
0 4
0/Gold 6
1 700
1/Counterfeit 60
2 150
3 90
4 75
5 50
6 35
7 20
8-10 15
11 12
12-22 10
23-31 6
32-40 5
41-50 4
51 6
52-57 4
58-60 3
61-62 4
63-100 3
101-299 2
300 4

Challengers of the Unknown DC, 1958
1 1450
2 375
3-8 220
9-10 140
11-15 90
16-23 52
24-31 25
32-49 20
50-56 15
57-69 11
70-73 7
74 14
➥Adams art; Deadman
75-80 7
81 6
82-87 5

Chamber of Chills HARVEY, 1951
1 350
2-4 275
5-9 250
10-19 225
20-25 200
26 175

Chamber of Chills MARVEL, 1972
1 25
2-10 15
11-22 12
22/30¢ 20
23 12
23/30¢ 20
24-25 12

Champions MARVEL, 1975
1 15
2-3 6
4-5 5
5/30¢ 20
6 4
6/30¢ 20
7 4
7/30¢ 20
8-14 4
14/35¢ 15
15 4
15/35¢ 15
16-17 4

Civil War MARVEL, 2006
1 10
2 7
2/Variant 4
3-4/Variant 3

Civil War: Front Line MARVEL, 2006
1-6 3

Civil War: X-Men MARVEL, 2006
1-3 3

Conan DARK HORSE, 2004
0 4
1 10
1/2nd 3
2 5
2/2nd-31 3

Conan the Barbarian MARVEL, 1970
1 160
➥1st comics Conan
2 55
3 72
4 26
5 30
6-7 26
8 30
9 20
➥Giant-size
10-11 35
➥Giant-size
12 15
13-14 20
15 17
16 20
17 17
18 20
19 17
20 27
➥1st Red Sonja
21-24 20
25 10
26-30 8
31-35 7
36-38 9
39-47 7
48-50 6
51-61 5
61/30¢ 20
62 5
62/30¢ 20
63 5
63/30¢ 20
64 5
64/30¢ 20
65 5
65/30¢ 20
66-75 5
75/35¢ 15
76 5
76/35¢ 15
77 5
77/35¢ 15
78 5
78/35¢ 15
79 5
79/35¢ 15
80-93 5
94-99 4
100 6
101-274 2
275 3
Ann 1 10
Ann 2-3 6
Ann 4-12 2
Special 1 3

Creatures on the Loose MARVEL, 1971
10 50
➥1st Kull; Wrightson
11-15 15
16-22 10
23-26 6
27-29 5
30 25
➥Man-Wolf
31 12
32-36 8
37 12
King Size 1 10

Crime Patrol E.C., 1948
7 600
8-9 575
10 550
11-14 500
15 2200
➥1st Cryptkeeper
16 1500

Crime Suspen-Stories E.C., 1950
1 800
1/A 1000
➥#1 marked out
2 475
3-5 315
6-10 235
11-12 185
13 210
14-15 185
16 190
17 235
18-19 170
20 215
21 115
22-23 145
24-27 115

Crisis on Infinite Earths DC, 1985
1 5
2-3 4
4 3
5 5
6 3
7-8 5
9-12 3

Crypt of Shadows MARVEL, 1973
1 35
2 16
3 15
4-5 12
6-14 10
15-21 8

Danger Trail DC, 1950
1 875
2 600
3 1250
➥Scarce
4-5 385

Daredevil MARVEL, 1964
-1 2
1 3000
➥1st Daredevil
2 750
3 550
4 400
5 300
6 225
7 675
➥1st red costume
8-10 135
11-15 85
➥Spider-Man app.
16-17 120
➥Spider-Man app.
18 70
➥1st Gladiator
19 60
20 55
21-27 50
28-30 45
31-42 40
43 45
44-49 30
50-52 33
53-71 20
72-80 17
81 25
➥Giant-size
82-83 17
84-99 14
100 30
➥Origin recap
101-130 8
131 75
➥1st Bullseye
132 15
132/30¢ 20
133 6
133/30¢ 20
134 6
134/30¢ 20
135 6
135/30¢ 20
136 6
136/30¢ 20
137-146 6
146/35¢ 15

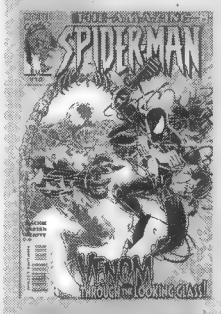
Wildcat ends

Alex Toth art

Goes bimonthly

NM Price	89 MAY 49	90 JUN 49	91 JUL 49	92 AUG 49	93 SEP 49	94 NOV 49	95 JAN 50	96 MAR 50	97 MAY 50
	$385	$385	$190	$190	$190	$350	$180	$190	$190

RETROVIEW
Amazing Spider-Man #19 ★★★



Marvel
Jul 2000 • 22 pp.
Writer: Howard Mackie
Pencils: Erik Larsen
Inks: John Beatty
Cover: Larsen, Scott Hanna

"Mirror Mirror"

Venom thinks he has to eliminate Spider-Man to have any chance at reconciliation with his wife.

Just in case readers had forgotten about Venom, Howard Mackie brings him back in this Done in One story that also heralds the return of artist Erik Larsen to the series.

Mackie's resolution to the Venom/Spidey conflict is inspired, but it's a shame that it doesn't work and only drives the wedge between Venom and Spider-Man deeper. Why can't these two ever just get along?

Subplots a'plenty are also being developed with Jill Stacy and Randy Robertson.

© Marvel

Best CGC copy: 9.4 **Then $2.25 NOW $3**

Amazing Spider-Man #20 ★★★

© Marvel

"Set Up!" • 22 pp.

The mystery behind J. Jonah Jameson's moratorium on Spider-Man stories is revealed.

Fans of the Spider-Slayer stories are in for a treat with this "100-Page Monster" issue (page count includes covers) which has a new lead story and reprints a trio of stories from the past, specifically *Amazing Spider-Man* Vol. 1 #25, #58, and #192.

The lead story finally answers a number of questions that have been hanging around for months, plus revisits the Senator Ward sub-plot.

"Captured by J. Jonah Jameson!" • 20 pp.

"To Kill a Spider-Man!" • 20 pp.

"24 Hours Till Doomsday!" • 18 pp.

Marvel
Aug 2000
Writers: Howard Mackie, et al.
Pencils: Erik Larsen, et al.
Inks: John Beatty, et al.
Cover: Larsen

No CGC copies

Then $2.99 NOW $5

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
147	.6
147/35¢	.15
148	.6
148/35¢	.15
149-157	.6
158	.50
➥Frank Miller starts	
159	.22
160-161	.17
162	.9
163	.18
164-167	.11
168	.75
➥1st Elektra	
169	.16
170	.10
171	.12
172-177	.7
178-180	.6
181	.15
➥Elektra dies	
182-183	.7
184	.6
185	.5
186	.6
187-190	.5
191	.6
192-195	.3
196	.6
197-204	.3
205	.4
206-226	.3
227	.4
➥FM Born Again	
228-247	.3
248-249	.4
250	.3
251	.5
252	.4
253	.3
254	.6
➥1st Typhoid Mary	
255-257	.3
258	.4
259-295	.3
296-299	.2
300	.3
301-303	.2
304	.3
305-311	.2
312	.3
313-318	.2
319	.5
320-321	.2
321/Variant	.3
322-324	.2
325	.3
326-349	.2
350	.3
350/Variant	.4
351-374	.2
375	.3
376-379	.2
380	.3
Ann 1	.50
Ann 2-3	.9
Ann 4	.8
Ann 5	.4
Ann 6-10	.3
Ann 1997	.4

Daredevil
MARVEL, 1998

1/2	.5
1	.7
1/Ltd	.50
1/Variant	.9
2/A-2/B	.5
3-5	.4
5/A	.5
6-15	.3
16	.5
16/Unlimited	.6
17	.3
17/Unlimited	.5
➥Newsstand variant	
18-20	.3
20/Unlimited	.5
21	.3
21/Unlimited	.5
22	.3
22/Unlimited	.5
23	.3
23/Unlimited	.5
24-36	.3
36/No #	.5
➥Newsstand, no #	
37	.3
37/Unlimited	.5
➥Newsstand variant	
37/No #	.4
➥Newsstand; no #	
38-56	.3
57	.4
58-64	.3
65	.4
66-89	.3

Dark Horse Presents
DARK HORSE, 1986

1	.4
2-4	.3
5-9	.2
10-16	.3
17	.2
18	.3
19-23	.2
24	.6
➥1st comics Aliens	
25-27	.2
28	.3
29-31	.2
32	.4
➥Concrete app.	
33-35	.3
36	.4
36/A	.3
37-39	.2
40	.3
41-49	.2
50	.3
51	.4
➥2nd Sin City	
52-53	.3
54	.4
55	.2
56-57	.4
58	.2
59-61	.3
62	.4
➥All Sin City	
63-66	.3
67	.4
68-134	.3
135	.4
136-149	.3
150	.5
151-157	.3
Ann '97-'00	.5

DC Comics Presents
DC, 1978

1	.9
2	.7
3	.4
4-5	.2
6	.6
7-9	.2
9/Whitman	.6
10-25	.2
26	.14
➥1st New Teen Titans	
27	.3
28-41	.2
42-43	.1
44	.2
45-46	.1
47	.17
➥1st Masters Universe	
48-50	.1
51	.6
52	.3
53-71	.1
72	.2
73-76	.1
77-78	.3
79-84	.1
85	.6
➥Moore Swamp Thing	
86-92	.1
93	.2
94-97	.1
Ann 1-Ann 4	.3

DC 100 Page Super Spectacular
DC, 1971

4	.175
5	.350
➥Scarce	
6	.150
7	.60
8-9	.75
10-13	.60
14-17	.45
18	.30
19	.24
20	.35
21-22	.22

DC Special
DC, 1968

1	.60
2	.50
3	.35
4	.25
5-14	.20
15	.16
16-28	.10
29	.12

DC Special Blue Ribbon Digest
DC, 1980

1	.5
2-5	.4
6-17	.3
18	.4
19	.3
20	.7
21-23	.3

CBG Trendwatcher

Michael Tierney, Collector's Edition

The effect that children have on the comics industry is never more apparent than in the month of September. Either my customers are students or they are the parents of children going back to school and the cost of tuition and supplies combine to impact customer budgets. So, September has traditionally been a deep valley on my annual sales charts.

But after years of surviving these valleys of shadow by ordering conservatively, there started to be exceptions, beginning with the now infamously overprinted *X-Men* #1 (Oct 91). It wasn't a good month by any stretch of the imagination, since the copies purchased drastically exceeded the quantity sold (I *still* have half-dozen long boxes of #1 in storage.), but sales were up. Then other years began to break the pattern. There was the year when *Pokémon* was considered by many PokeMoms to be as essential as school supplies, the year when *JLA/Avengers* #1 sold out, and the last couple of years when *Infinite Crisis* and its prequels stampeded through sales registers.

September 2006 was a combination of all of the above. It was a month of feast and famine, when Marvel finally retook the #1 sales title back from DC on the strength of two words: "Civil War." All of the "Civil War" core titles and crossovers sold very well, but late shipping caused the first couple of weeks in the month to be famine. As Marvel held books back to avoid shipping spoilers, the last couple of weeks were an avalanche of Marvel comics once *Civil War* #4 did finally arrive. It was more inventory in a short period than customers could feast on. But enough copies sold by the end of the month that total sales were a mirror reflection of last year. Not quite as profitable, but a profit maker none-the-less, and that's what keeps my store doors open.

DC was a close second at the sales finish line, as *52* continued to sell well, but slowed somewhat. The new *Justice League of America* series and the new creative team on *Batman* continue to excite customers. But across the rest of the DC line, which includes Batman-related titles and all of the Superman line, sales are dropping. The exception is *Supergirl and the Legion of Super-Heroes*, which has found its audience and seems to be keeping them. The brightest spot for DC is in how well *Jack of Fables* is selling. It's not so much that the monthly sales for this book are impressive, but rather how it seems to be boosting sales on the core title of *Fables* from which it spun. I'm seeing runs of the *Fables* graphic novels selling in bunches that remind me of the heyday of *Sandman*.

Limited variant editions of new comics seem to be replacing back-issue comics sales right now, with Marvel being the hottest in demand. But when customers did choose Silver Age back issues, DC comics were what they bought the most of, as is reflected in my Key Sales.

Key Sales (all unslabbed):
Adventure Comics #214 GD- $40
Adventure Comics #292 FN $25
Amazing Spider-Man #85 VG+ $22
Civil War #2-4 Turner Sketch Variant NM $74.95@

House Picks

A sense of Justice, Part 2
1. ***JSA Classified* #1.**
2. ***Power Girl* #1.**
3. ***JSA Classified* #10**
4. ***Zatanna* #1**
5. ***JSA Strange Adventures* #1**

Detective Comics #284 VG+ $38
My Greatest Adventure #74 VG+ $19.75
My Greatest Adventure #76 GD+ $19.75
Serenity #1 NM $12 (2 copies)
Strange Adventures #228 VF- $17
Superboy #42 VG- $59

Michael Tierney *runs* ***Collector's Edition*** *in North Little Rock and* ***The Comic Book Store*** *in Little Rock, Ark. He can be reached at* ***cbsrock@swbell.net*** *or* ***(501) 791-4222.***

Captain-DC

1st Astra — Robot cover — Wonder Woman ends — Johnny Peril begins — Becomes *Sensation Mystery* — "Justice Society Returns"

	98 JUL 50	99 SEP 50	100 NOV 50	101 JAN 51	102 MAR 51	103 MAY 51	104 JUL 51	105 SEP 51	106 NOV 51	107 JAN 52	108 MAR 52	109 MAY 52	2nd series (one-shot)	1 MAY 99
NM Price	$190	$190	$450	$450	$450	$450	$450	$450	$450	$450	$450	$450		$2

PRICE GUIDE KEY:
OTHER CGC GRADES
Slabbed CGC 9.8 (NM/M) is **3 times** the CGC 9.4 price above
CGC 9.0 (VF/NM) is **2/5 (40%)** of CGC 9.4
CGC 9.6 (NM+) is **1.5 times** CGC 9.4
CGC 8.0 (VF) is **1/5 (20%)** of CGC 9.4

Hellsing: Impure Souls #1

Dracula spelled backwards is Alucard, the ace of the secret English paramilitary squad. Led by Lady Integra Hellsing, they combat what the government cannot: the rising incidence of vampirism. What better way to fight fire with fire than to unleash the devil's own gun-toting, blood-thirsty madman?

DARK HORSE
WRITER:
KOHTA HIRANO
ARTIST:
KOHTA HIRANO
Color • 160 Pgs.
$14.95

Unfortunately for police girl Victoria Seras, she is bitten when confronting a nighttime menace. Saved by Alucard, she has become a fanged super-powered inhuman herself and is enlisted by Hellsing to use her sharp-shooting skills against other renegade freaks. But can she help her master and the organization survive a full-scale assault by the vicious Valentine brothers and their ghoul soldiers?

As anime series are wont to do, this adaptation condenses the manga's plotline but loses the creator's distinctive style in the process. Unfortunately, the anime, which covers the first six episodes of the animated series, loses even more, due to inconsistent translation, blurry reproduction, and abrupt scene transitions.

★★ **— Oliver Chin**

www.darkhorse.com
ISBN: 1-59307-393-3

DC Special Series
DC, 1977

UNSLABBED Near Mint	
1	.10
2-5	.7
6-8	.6
9	.16
10-14	.6
15	.8
16	.20
➥Jonah Hex dies	
17-18	.5
19-20	.6
21	.12
➥1st Miller Batman	
22-26	.6
27	.18

Dead@17
VIPER, 2003

UNSLABBED Near Mint	
0	.27
1	.35
2	.22
3	.10
4	.7

Deadly Hands of Kung Fu
MARVEL, 1974

UNSLABBED Near Mint	
1	.30
2	.8
3-5	.6
6-10	.5
11-19	.4
20	.7
21-30	.3
31	.6
32-33	.3
Special 1	.4

Dead of Night
MARVEL, 1973

UNSLABBED Near Mint	
1	.35
2	.12
3-10	.8
11	.16

Defenders
MARVEL, 1972

UNSLABBED Near Mint	
1	.90
2	.35
3	.30
4-5	.26
6-7	.16
8	.25
9	.16
10	.55
➥Avengers War	
11	.15
12-13	.9
14-16	.10
17-20	.7
21-24	.6
25-29	.7
30-33	.4
34	.5
34/30¢	.20
35	.5
35/30¢	.20
36	.5
36/30¢	.20
37	.5
37/30¢	.20
38-38/30¢	.5
39-47	.4
48	.5
48/35¢	.15
49	.4
49/35¢	.15
50	.4
50/35¢	.15
51	.4
51/35¢	.15
52	.4
52/35¢	.15
53-62	.4
63	.5
64-92	.4
93-100	.3
101-152	.2
Ann 1	.12

Demon
DC, 1972

UNSLABBED Near Mint	
1	.30
2	.12
3-4	.10
5-9	.9
10-11	.7
12-13	.10
14-16	.7

Detective Comics
DC, 206

UNSLABBED Near Mint	
0	.3
1	.80000
2	.18250
3	.10800
4-5	.6850
6-7	.4450
8	.6500
9-17	.4350
18	.5000
19	.4150
20	.6300
21	.3250
22	.3950
23-26	.3250
27	.225000
➥1st Batman	
27/2nd	.9
28	.25000
➥2nd Batman	
29	.35000
➥3rd Batman	
30	.7500
31	.27500
32	.6000
33	.50000
➥Batman origin	
34	.7500
35	.10000
36-37	.6500
38	.57500
➥1st Robin	
39	.6000
40	.6500
41	.4000
42-45	.3000
46-50	.2000
51-57	.1750
58	.4750
➥1st Penguin	
59	.2000
60	.1750
61	.1500
62	.2250
63	.1750
64	.5000
➥1st Boy Commandos	
65	.2250
66	.4000
➥1st Two-Face	
67	.2000
68-69	.1750
70-71	.1500
72-75	.1250
76	.1500
77-79	.1000
80	.1250
81-83	.1000
84	.900
85	.1250
86-90	.900
91	.1000
92-98	.800
99	.950
100	.1000
101	.700
102	.950
103-108	.625
109	.850
110-113	.625
114	.800
115-117	.625
118	.825
119	.600
120	.800
➥Penguin app.	
121	.600
122	.1225
123	.600
124	.800
125-127	.600
128	.800
129-130	.600
131-136	.525
137	.675
138	.925
➥Robotman origin	
139	.500
140	.4000
➥1st Riddler	
141	.575
142	.1250
➥2nd Riddler	
143-148	.575
149	.675
150	.550
151	.600
152-155	.525
156	.625
157-160	.500
161-167	.525
168	.3750
➥Joker origin	
169-170	.500
171	.700
172-176	.500
177-179	.400
180	.450
181-186	.400
187	.425
188-189	.400
190	.600
191-192	.400
193	.450
194-199	.400
200	.575
201-202	.400
203	.450
204	.400
205	.575
206-210	.400
211	.450
212	.400
213	.525
214-224	.375
225	.4500
➥1st Manhunter	
226	.1500
227-229	.500
230	.550
231	.400
232	.300
233	.1250
➥1st Batwoman	
234	.325
235	.600
236	.350
237-240	.300
241-260	.250
261-264	.200
265	.325
266	.200
267	.250
268-271	.200
272	.175
273	.200
274-280	.150
281-297	.125
298	.200
299-310	.100
311	.200
➥1st Catman	
312-326	.100
327	.225
➥New Bat symbol	
328	.175
➥Alfred dies	
329-330	.75
331	.65
332	.115
➥Joker	
333-340	.60
341	.75
342-352	.60
353-358	.75
359	.350
➥1st Batgirl	
360-362	.65
363	.100
➥2nd Batgirl	
364	.60
365	.90
366-368	.60
369	.75
370	.45
371	.80
➥Batmobile	
372-376	.50
377	.65
378-380	.50
381-386	.40
387	.75
388	.50
389-390	.35
391-393	.25
394	.35
395	.125
➥N. Adams art	
396-397	.35
398-399	.30
400	.175
➥1st Man-Bat	
401	.30
402	.55
403-404	.35
405-407	.30
408-410	.40
411	.30
➥1st Talia	
412-424	.25
425-427	.20
428-436	.15
437	.20
➥100-page issue	
438-445	.28
➥100-page issue	
446	.12
447-450	.8
451-455	.6
456-457	.9
458-462	.6
463	.45
➥1st Calculator	
464	.6
465-468	.9
469-470	.5
471-473	.8
➥1st new Deadshot	
474-496	.15
477-479	.8
480	.5
481	.7
482	.5
483	.8
484	.5
485-499	.4
500	.5
501-503	.4
504	.6
505-523	.4
524	.5
525-534	.4
535	.5
536-564	.4
565-568	.3
569-570	.4
571	.3
572	.4
573-574	.3
575	.4
576-577	.3
578-585	.4
586-587	.3
588-590	.4
591-675	.3
675/Platinum	.5
675/Variant	.4
676	.3
677-682	.2
682/Variant	.3
683-699	.2
700	.4
700/Variant	.5
701-718	.2
719	.3
720	.4
721-722	.3
723-740	.2
741	.3
742-746	.2
747-749	.3
750	.5
751	.12
➥1st Sasha	
752-774	.3
775	.4
776-799	.3
800	.4
801-816	.3
817	.12
818-823	.3
1000000	.4
1000000/Variant	15
Ann 1	.5
Ann 2	.4
Ann 3-7	.3
Ann 8	.4
Ann 9	.3
Ann 10	.4

Devil Dinosaur
MARVEL, 1978

UNSLABBED Near Mint	
1	.5
2-3	.4

RETROVIEW
Amazing Spider-Man #21 ★★½

"Slayers to the Left of Me ..."

Spider-Man tracks down an army of miniature Spider-Slayers that are targeted at his friends and family.

Howard Mackie comes up with creative ways for Spider-Man to take down the mini Spider-Slayers without anyone figuring out his secret identity. However, astute readers figured out what was controlling the little critters pages before Spidey did.

One disappointing aspect of this story was when Alistair Smythe introduced every Spider-Slayer that Spider-Man had faced in the past into the battle and then little was done with them. They could have prolonged the battle this issue.

Marvel
Sep 2000 • 22 pp.
Writer: Howard Mackie
Pencils: Erik Larsen
Inks: Rodney Ramos
Cover: Larsen, John Beatty

© Marvel

No CGC Comics

Then $2.25 NOW $2

△ #1

Team Titans

Titans tidbits

At the height of expansion in the early 1990s, nearly every DC hero or team had one or more ancillary books. *Team Titans* featured a group of teen heroes from an alternate future who tried to affect events to bring that alternate future about. The series lasted just two years.

image © 1992 DC

Five variants | 1st Battalion | 1st Judge & Jury | 1st Deathwing

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	SEP 92	OCT 92	NOV 92	DEC 92	FEB 93	MAR 93	APR 93	MAY 93	JUN 93	JUL 93
NM Price	$4	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2

Amazing Spider-Man #22 ★★★

"The Distinguished Gentleman from New York, Part 1"

Arthur Stacy's obsession with Senator Ward, who's acquired the Venom symbiote, draws Spider-Man into the fight.

If, from the little hints Howard Mackie and John Byrne have dropped over the past several months, readers thought Senator Ward was dangerous before, they haven't seen anything yet.

It appears the Senator has control of some sort of flesh-eating virus and that type of virus was the "big thing" at the time these stories were written, so it makes sense to use those fears to make a scary villain.

Marvel
Oct 2000 • 22 pp.
Writers: Howard Mackie
Pencils: John Romita Jr
Inks: Scott Hanna
Cover: Romita Jr. / Hanna

Borock's Passing Grade

They're reading for fun at CGC

Comics Guaranty's CGC graders see it *all*, right? So we asked them what comics they're reading for themselves, these days. Check out some responses!

President and Primary Grader Steve Borock

The King by Rich Koslowski! It's his newest graphic novel and it's just amazing! I read anything by him, though I still want more *3 Geeks*, and their 10th anniversary is coming up. Hint, hint …

Captain America I have been a fan of Cap's since I was a kid. This is the best run on this title in many, many years.

Fables This is probably the first book I read when I get home with my new books. Everybody I turn onto this book just falls in love with it.

Spider-Girl Reading this to my daughter, Rachel, at bedtime got me into this series; we are on the second collection at the moment. It's well written and takes me back to the days as a boy reading late-'60 Marvels.

Girls Just having a great time reading this. It's a fresh idea done very well. I still miss ***Transmetropolitan*** …

Vice President, Senior Grader, and Pedigree expert Mark Haspel

Jonah Hex It has been one of my favorite titles for many years, and I have been very impressed with the new series. Jimmy Palmiotti's writing has been superb, highlighted by *Jonah Hex* #9, my favorite story from the new series to date. Tony DeZuniga has done the art for many of the new issues; he is one of the few artists whose work has grown significantly better with time. His style really fits the time period being portrayed and adds quite a bit of character to the plot. I'll keep buying this title for as long as it comes out and I highly recommend it to anyone looking to read something off the beaten path.

Senior Grader and Modern Age specialist Paul Litch

DMZ The first of my personal "Holy Brian Trinity" of writers. Wood just replaced some guy named Bendis.

100 Bullets The second of the "Holy Brian Trinity." So, so, *so* woven and intricate.

Ex Machina The last representative of the "Holy Brian Trinity." I had a hard time deciding which book from Vaughn to pick.

Hulk Hadn't been this fun in years.

New X-Men With Craig and Chris, nothing is safe.

Nextwave: Agents of HATE Pure debauchery.

Grader and Modern Age specialist Shawn Caffrey

Walking Dead Not just because of my over-obsessive love for zombies, but because of writer Robert Kirkman's character-driven "storytelling of survival" genius.

Pre-Grader William Bodin

Daredevil Always good drama and action; great stories and art.

Astonishing X-Men Great dialogue stories and art.

Batman Always need to know what's going on with Bats. It's Batman Moon Knight; not since Sienkiewicz has this character been anywhere near this interesting. Dark, moody, brutal fun stuff.

JLA Just fun to read all the different characters interact.

Quality Control and DC specialist Jerry Stephan

Invincible A fresh, fun take on the super-hero strip. It makes me remember why I began reading comics in the first place.

Legion of Super-Heroes Long live the Legion! The oldest Silver Age super-team is as good as ever.

(continued on Page 145)

DC-Fables

$

No CGC copies **Then $2.25 NOW $2**

Doctor Solar, Man of the Atom
GOLD KEY, 1962
UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 150
2 80
3 50
4 60
5 30
6-10 25
11-14 16
15 20
16-20 16
21-27 12
28-31 4

Doctor Strange
MARVEL, 1968
UNSLABBED Near Mint
169 75
170-171 30
172-173 27
174 20
175 35
176-183 27

Doctor Strange
MARVEL, 1974
UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 25
2 18
3-4 10
5-6 8
7 7
8-9 4
10 7
11 6
12-13 4
13/30¢ 20
14 3
14/30¢ 20
15 3
15/30¢ 20
16 3
16/30¢ 20
17 3
17/30¢ 20
18-23 3
23/35¢ 15
24 3
24/35¢ 15
25 3
25/35¢ 15
26-81 2
Ann 1 6
Special 1 3

Donald Duck
DELL, 1952
UNSLABBED Near Mint
26 300
27-29 100
30-44 65
45 125
➥Barks art
46 175
➥Barks "Secret"
47-51 65
52 150
➥Barks "Lost"
53 65
54 125
➥Barks Forbid. Valley
55-58 50
59-60 125
➥Barks "Ants"
61-67 40
68 100
➥Barks art
69-70 40
71-84 30
85-120 25
121-135 20
136-150 15
151-190 10
191-210 5
211-216 3
217 5
218-219 10
220-228 15
229-240 8
241-245 15
246 17
247-249 5
250 8
251-260 4
261-279 3
280-285 2
286 3
287-307 2

Doom Patrol
DC, 1964
UNSLABBED Near Mint
86 135
87 70
88-90 50
91-98 40
99 60
100 75
101-120 25
121 45
➥Doom Patrol dies
122-124 2

Doom Patrol
DC, 1987
UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 3
2-18 2
19 3
20-49 2
50 3
51-56 2
57 3
58-87 2
Ann 1 1
Ann 2 4

Dudley Do-Right
CHARLTON, 1970
UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 45
2 18
3 12
4-7 10

Dynamo
TOWER, 1966
UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 35
2-3 25
4 40

Earth Man on Venus
AVON, 1951
UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 875

80 Page Giant Magazine
DC, 1964
UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 295
2 150
3-5 125
7 150
8 265
➥Secret Origins
9-11 125
12-15 80

Elseworlds 80-Page Giant
DC, 1999
UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 110

Eternals
MARVEL, 1976
UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 10
1/30¢ 25
2 5
2/30¢ 20
3-5 3
6-12 2
12/35¢ 15
13 2
13/35¢ 15
14 2
14/35¢ 15
15 2
15/35¢ 15
16 2
16/35¢ 15
17-19 2
Ann 1 7

Excalibur
MARVEL, 1988
UNSLABBED Near Mint
-1 2
1 3
2-49 2
50 3
51-70 2
71 4
➥Hologram cover
72-75 2
75/Variant 4
76-81 2
82 3
82/Variant 4
83-99 2
100 3
101-124 2
125 3
Ann 1 4
Ann 2 3

Exiles
MARVEL, 2001
UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 4
2-24 2
25-59 3
60 5
➥Age of Apoc.
61 4
➥Age of Apoc.
62-86 3

Fables
DC, 2002
UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 4
2-5 3
6/Retailer ed. .15

Metallik appears — Deathwing appears — Fights Chronos — Mirage fights Deathwing — Redwing mutates — *Zero Hour* tie-in — "Bloodlines: Earthplague" — "Elseworlds"

11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	Ann. 1	Ann. 2
AUG 93	SEP 93	OCT 93	NOV 93	DEC 93	JAN 94	FEB 94	MAR 94	APR 94	MAY 94	JUN 94	JUL 94	AUG 94	SEP 94	1993	1994
$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$4	$3

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CGC 9.0 (VF/NM) is **2/5 (40%)** of CGC 9.4
CGC 9.6 (NM+) is **1.5 times** CGC 9.4
CGC 8.0 (VF) is **1/5 (20%)** of CGC 9.4

Koni Waves #1

The cover featured the guys from Stormwatch Comics, one of my local comic-book stores. They're pictured in a strip club with the main character dancing topless, but this wasn't part of the story.

ARCANA
WRITER:
MARK POULTON
ARTIST:
STEPHEN SISTILLI
B/W • 24 Pgs.
$2.95

Koni Waves is a stripper turned cop turned, sorta, private detective. There's a good recap on the inside cover that brings you right up to speed. Koni is beautiful and brave, but she has an alcohol problem. I was glad to see that it actually affected her during the course of the story.

I like this comic book. It takes place in Hawaii and would probably make a good television show. The art reminded me a little of *Jon Sable* and Mike Grell's other work. Stephen Sistilli's art shows a real eye for detail.

Mark Pulton's script was like an episode of *Hawaii 5-0* with a drunken hot chick as the main character. Additionally, he throws in supernatural elements and, in this issue, Hawaiian folklore. Quite frankly, I didn't think it needed these elements, but it didn't hurt the comic book. I say, check it out.

★★★ — **Tony DiGerolamo**

www.arcanastudio.com

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Fables	
CONTINUED	
6-49	.3
50	.4
51-53	.3
Family Guy	
DEVIL'S DUE, 2006	
1-2	.7
Famous First Edition	
DC, 1974	
F-4	.15
➥Whiz #2	
F-5	.13
➥Batman #1	
F-6	.10
➥W. Woman #1	
F-7	.12
➥All-Star #3	
F-8	.9
➥Flash #1	
C-26	.10
➥Action #1	
C-28	.9
➥Detective #27	
C-30	.10
➥Sensation #1	
C-61	.9
➥Superman #1	
Fantastic Four	
MARVEL, 1961	
1	20000
➥1st Fantastic Four	
1/Golden	.70
2	4500
➥1st Skrulls	
3	3000
4	3500
5	5000
➥1st Dr. Doom	
6	2000
7	1250
8	1200
9-10	1150
11	1000
12	2700
➥Thing vs. Hulk	
13	.600
14	.500
15	.700
16-19	.500
20	.600
21	.450
22-23	.250
24	.240
25	.550
➥Avengers app.	
26	.600
➥Avengers app.	
27	.300
28	.500
➥X-Men app.	
29-31	.260
32-34	.250
35-40	.165
41-43	.110
44	.85
45	.325
➥1st Inhumans	
46	.150
47	.100
48	.460
➥1st Silver Surfer	
49	.350
50	.400

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
51	.150
52	.300
➥1st Black Panther	
53	.140
54	.105
55	.210
➥Thing vs. Surfer	
56	.100
57	.115
58	.90
59	.60
60	.65
61	.70
62-63	.60
64	.50
65	.55
66	.115
➥1st Warlock	
67	.105
68-69	.60
70	.55
71	.45
72	.100
➥Silver Surfer app.	
73	.80
74	.85
75	.55
76	.45
77	.50
78	.35
79	.50
80-85	.40
86	.50
87	.40
88-89	.35
90-93	.30
94	.40
95-96	.30
97-98	.25
99	.30
100	.70
101-105	.30
106	.22
107	.30
108	.22
109-111	.20
112	.175
➥Thing vs. Hulk	
113	.25
114	.27
115	.25
116	.65
➥52 pages	
117-120	.15
121	.30
➥Galactus app.	
122	.45
123	.27
124-125	.20
126	.30
127	.35
128	.30
129	.25
130-132	.15
133-145	.12
146	.10
147	.15
148-154	.10
155	.15
156-158	.12
159-163	.10
164	.9
165	.7
166	.10
167	.15
168-169	.10
169/30¢	.20
170	.10
170/30¢	.20
171	.6
171/30¢	.20
172	.6
172/30¢	.20
173	.6
173/30¢	.20
174-183	.6
183/35¢	.15

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
184	.6
184/35¢	.15
185	.5
185/35¢	.15
186	.5
186/35¢	.15
187	.5
187/35¢	.15
188-200	.5
➥Byrne script/art begins	
201-239	.4
240-248	.3
249	.4
250	.5
251	.4
252-255	.3
256	.4
257-259	.3
260	.5
261	.4
262-268	.3
269	.4
270	.3
271	.4
272	.5
273-286	.3
287-295	.2
296	.3
297-299	.2
300	.3
301-318	.2
319	.3
320-346	.2
347-350	.3
351-357	.2
358	.3
359-370	.2
371	.3
372-374	.1
375	.3
376-378	.1
379-380	.2
381	.3
382	.2
383-387	.1
387/Variant	.3
388-394	.2
394/Collector's	.3
395-398	.2
398/Variant	.3
399	.2
399/Variant	.3
400	.4
401-415	.2

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
416-500/Collector's4	
501	.2
502	.5
503-508	.3
509	.2
510-513	.3
514-516	.2
517-526	.3
527	.7
➥Straczynski starts	
527/Variant	.4
527/DirCut	.5
527/Conv	.7
528-535	.3
536	.10
537	.7
538-539	.3
Ann 1	.900
Ann 2	.500
Ann 3	.175
Ann 4	.90
Ann 5	.60
Ann 6	.40
Ann 7-8	.18
Ann 9	.10
Ann 10-11	.8
Ann 12-14	.5
Ann 15-27	.3
Special 1	.2
Ashcan 1	.1
Fantastic Four	
MARVEL, 1996	
1	.4
1/Variant	.3
1/Gold	.4
2-11	.2
12	.3
13	.2
Fantastic Four	
MARVEL, 1998	
1	.3
1/A	.4
2-5	.3
6-24	.2
25	.3
26-34	.2
35	.3
36-49	.2
50-51	.4
52	.2
53	.3
54	.4

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
55-59	.2
60	.1
61-70	.2
Ann 1998	.5
Ann 1999	.4
Ann 2001	.3
Fantasy Masterpieces	
MARVEL, 1966	
1	.75
2	.35
3	.30
4-8	.18
9	.30
➥Torch origin	
10	.10
11	.15
F.B.I.	
DELL, 1965	
1	.60
Fear	
MARVEL, 1970	
1	.95
2	.30
3-4	.15
5	.20
6-9	.15
10	.35
➥Man-Thing starts	
11	.18
12	.12
13-14	.9
15-17	.12
18	.9
19	.25
➥1st Howard Duck	
20	.20
➥Morbius begins	
21	.9
22	.7
23	.8
24	.12
➥Blade app.	
25	.8
26-29	.7
30	.12
31	.7
52	
DC, 2006	
1	.4
2-6	.3
7	.4
8-26	.3

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Fight Comics	
FICTION HOUSE, 1940	
1	.3500
2	.1250
3	.650
4	.600
5	.500
6-10	.450
11-14	.425
15-16	.500
17-18	.425
19	.450
20-30	.350
31-40	.200
41-50	.175
51-60	.125
61-86	.100
Fightin' 5	
CHARLTON, 1964	
28	.20
29-30	.10
31-39	.9
40	.18
➥1st Peacemaker	
41	.10
42-49	.3
Fightin' Army	
CHARLTON, 1956	
16	.24
17-20	.18
21-30	.15
31-40	.12
41-50	.10
51-75	.8
76	.10
➥Willy Schultz	
77-100	.6
101-120	.5
121-172	.4
Flash	
DC, 1959	
105	.6500
106	.2000
107	.1000
108	.850
109	.650
110	.1500
➥1st Kid Flash	
111	.450
112	.600
➥1st Elong. Man	
113	.550
114	.275
115	.350

RETROVIEW
Amazing Spider-Man #23 ★★★

"The Distinguished Gentleman from New York, Part 2: How Many Times"

Senator Ward's origins and connection with Arthur Stacy are revealed.

What is it with Howard Mackie and icky, drippy super-villains? First, we had The Sandman in #17 and, now we have Senator Ward and his victims leaving oozing messes all over the place. Eeewww!

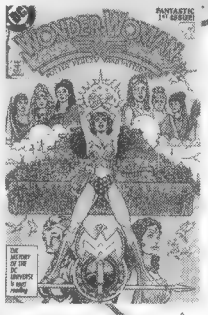
Marvel
Nov 2000 • 24 pp.
Writer: Howard Mackie
Pencils: John Romita Jr.
Inks: Scott Hanna
Cover: Romita Jr., Hanna

The flashbacks are good for establishing the connection between Senator Ward and Arthur Stacy, but they get jarring near the issue's end as Mackie switches between the past and present on facing pages. Is Sentry really Senator Ward?

© Marvel

No CBG copies

Then $2.25 NOW $2



△ #1

image © 1987 DC

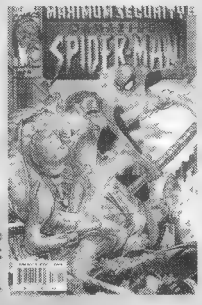
WONDER WOMAN

A legend reborn

Following the events of *Crisis on Infinite Earths*, the DC universe was left without a Wonder Woman until George Pérez reimagined the Amazon warrior's legend in a new series in early 1987 that drew more heavily on the Greek myths.

	New origin	Steve appears	Trevor	1st Decay		Fights Ares				1st Cheetah	Gatefold cover
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
NM Price	FEB 87 $4	MAR 87 $3	APR 87 $3	MAY 87 $3	JUN 87 $3	JUL 87 $3	AUG 87 $3	SEP 87 $3	OCT 87 $3	NOV 87 $3

Amazing Spider-Man #24 ★★★½



© Marvel

"The Distinguished Gentleman from New York, Part 3: Failure is Not an Option"

The final fate of Senator Ward actually helps solve a viral infection.

It took the better part of two years, but Howard Mackie finally wraps up the Senator Ward sub-plot and manages to tie it into the "Maximum Security" event running through the Marvel titles at this time. It's a clever use of the whole alien invasion theme and even ties back into events from *X-Men* Vol. 1 in the 1960s. Well done.

John Romita Jr. also deserves cudos for his Jack Kirby-inspired machinery.

Marvel
Dec 2000 • 24 pp.
Writer: Howard Mackie
Pencils: John Romita Jr.
Inks: Green
Cover: Romita Jr.

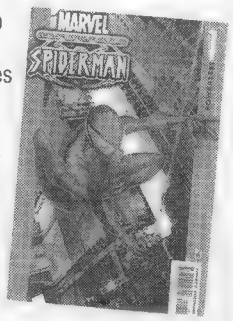
Borock's Passing Grade

(continued from Page 143)

Astro City Best-written super-hero strip at this time.

Strangers in Paradise Because Katchoo and Francine's problems make mine look so small.

Pre-Grader Bradley Bradley



Y: The Last Man An incredible "What If" scenario that always has shocking and exciting turns.

Friendly Neighborhood Spider-Man Great stories with equal parts fun and intelligence mixed in.

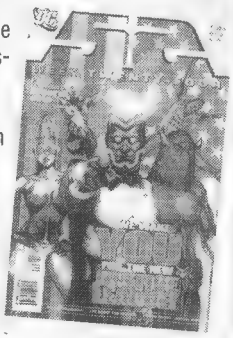
Ultimate Spider-Man A series I had very low expectations for proves itself every month with intriguing stories, laugh-out-loud moments, and dynamic art.

Cable/Deadpool Can a would-be messiah from the future get along with a deranged mercenary who can't shut up? Maybe not, but it's sure fun watching them try.

Amazing Spider-Girl The best series currently on the stands. It harkens back to the tone and the greatness of the Silver and Bronze Ages, full of "Hoo-Ha!" action and characters you care about. *Must* reading!

Pre-Grader Josh Hanin

Star Wars: Legacy It takes place more than 100 years after Luke Skywalker's time, so it is really interesting to watch what the *Star Wars* galaxy has become so many years after the events of the movies. It has great writing by John Ostrander, art by (in my opinion the greatest *Star Wars* comic artist of all time) Jan Duursema, and beautiful covers by fan-favorite Adam Hughes. What more can a *Star Wars* Geek want in a comic book?



52 I *love 52*. It is the greatest series to come out of DC in a long time. I love how they take "B"-list characters and make them "A"-list. It's amazing how they have kept up with their schedule, and the art and writing are top notch!

Pre-Grader Joe Peirson

Astonishing X-Men Joss Whedon is writing X-Men the best it's been since Claremont-Byrne.

Civil War Just a topical story being done really well — with a new take on characters like Iron Man and Mr. Fantastic: character assassination.

Justice League of America It's The Justice League of America (by Brad Meltzer).

Spider-Man books Now that the secret's out, wanna see what happens next.

Invincible, ***Walking Dead***, ***Ultimate X-Men*** Robert Kirkman is awesome.

Pre-Grader Matt Dakan

Runaways Teenaged angst that pays off well.

Strangetown New series from Chynna Clugston at Oni.

Street Fighter II The writing has improved from the first series, keeping the cool art.

All-Star Superman I love the way Morrison writes Lex Luthor.

Astonishing X-Men It is like watching the X-Men turned into a good TV show and then back into a comic book.

Steve Borock *is the president of and primary grader for* ***Comics Guaranty LLC.*** *He can be contacted at* ***(941) 360-3991*** *or* ***sborock@cgccomics.com.***
Visit the firm's website at ***www.cgccomics.com.***

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	UNSLABBED Near Mint
116	.250
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123 ➥1st Earth-2	.1500
124-128	.150
129 ➥GA Flash app.	.325
130	.150
131-136	.125
137 ➥GA Flash app.	.475
138-140	.125
141-142	.150
143	.125
144-150	.100
151	.80
152-153	.65
154-158	.60
159	.75
160 ➥Giant-size	.90
161-164	.50
165	.70
166-167	.50
168	.95
169 ➥Origin of Flash	.70
170-174	.50
175 ➥Race w/Superman	.175
176-179	.40
180	.50
181-183	.35
184	.50
185-186	.35
187	.65
188-191	.35
192-193	.25
194	.40
195	.25
196	.40
197-200	.25
201-202	.20
203	.25
204	.20
205	.35
206	.20
207-212	.17
213	.25
214	.40
215	.35
216-219	.17
220-228	.15
229	.30
230-231	.15

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
232 ➥100-page issue	.30
233-237	.10
238-245	.7
246	.12
247-262	.7
263-273	.4
274	.5
275	.7
276-288	.4
289	.5
290-299	.3
300	.5
301-304	.3
305-306	.4
307-349	.3
350	.7
Ann 1	.400

Flash Comics
DC, 1940

1 ➥1st Flash, Hawkman	.70000
2	.8000
3	.5500
4	.4500
5	.3500
6	.5000
7	.4500
8	.3000
9-10	.3250
11-20	.2000
21-24	.1600
25-40	.1000
41-50	.800
51-61	.600
62 ➥Kubert Hawkman	.1000
63-69	.600
70-85	.550
86 ➥1st Black Canary	.2250
87	.875
88-91	.900
92 ➥1st solo Bl. Canary	.3000
93	.700
94-99	.1000
100 ➥Scarce	.2500
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103 ➥Scarce	.2500
104 ➥Flash origin recap	.7000

Flintstones
DELL, 1961

1	.55
2	.38
3-5	.30
6-7	.24
8-10	.20
11-20	.18
21-30	.15
31-40	.12
41-60	.9

Flintstones
CHARLTON, 1970

1	.36
2	.22
3-5	.14
6-10	.9
11-20	.7
21-30	.5
31-50	.4

Forever People
DC, 1971

1	.35
2	.20
3-5	.18
6-11	.14

Four Star Spectacular
DC, 1976

1	.12
2-6	.7

Frankenstein
MARVEL, 1973

1	.40
2	.15
3-5	.9
6-7	.7
8	.18
9	.20
10	.6
11-18	.5

Freedom Fighters
DC, 1976

1	.12
2-3	.5
4-15	.4

Futurama
BONGO, 2000

1	.7
1/2nd-19	.3

Future World Comics
GEORGE W. DOUGHERTY, 1946

1	.200
2	.160

Generation X
MARVEL, 1994

-1	.2
1/2-1/2/Ltd.	.3
1	.4
2-24	.2
25	.3
26-49	.2
50- 50/Autographed	3
51-56	.2
57	.3
58-74	.2
75	.3
Ann 1995	.4
Ann '96-'97	.3
Ann '98-'99	.4
Ashcan 1	.1
Holiday 1	.4

George of the Jungle
GOLD KEY, 1969

1	.35
2	.24

Ghost Rider
MARVEL, 1973

1	.130
2	.37
3-4	.25
5	.23
6-14	.15
15-16	.12
17	.10
17/30¢	.20
18	.10
18/30¢	.20
19	.10
19/30¢	.20
20	.10
21-24	.7
24/35¢	.15
25	.7
25/35¢	.15
26	.7
26/35¢	.15
27-30	.7
31-49	.6

"Millennium" tie-ins · Hercules appears · 1st Silver Swan · Bonus Book · Goes to $1 · "Invasion!" tie-in

	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	DEC 87	JAN 88	FEB 88	MAR 88	APR 88	MAY 88	JUN 88	JUL 88	AUG 88	SEP 88	OCT 88	NOV 88	DEC 88	HOL 88	JAN 89
NM Price	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2

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Ms. Marvel: Best of the Best

Following the events of "House of M," Carol Danvers realized she wasn't living up to her potential as a super-hero and aims to try now, readopting her old Ms. Marvel code-name (about time!).

Here, in her first monthly series in more than 20 years, writer Brian Reed takes you on a straight-ahead super-hero adventure in the grand ol' Marvel tradition.

MARVEL
WRITER:
BRIAN REED
ARTIST:
ROBERTO DE LA TORRE
COLOR • 136 PGS.
$19.99

Reed realizes there's a lot to do with Carol and that's great; she has plenty of potential. Before gaining her powers, she was in the CIA and the Air Force. She also has a rich history, given her connection to the original Captain Marvel, The Avengers, and The X-Men. She's been downplayed in the Marvel universe for far too long. I'd like to see a confrontation with Rogue (been too long and it needs to be done in this book or *X-Men*, not an obscure title), as well as resolution with the Ventura version of Ms. Marvel. Sure that might be a *Fantastic Four* story, but The Thing has connections to both women named Ms. Marvel.

★★★ **— Kurt Anthony Krug**

www.marvel.com
ISBN: 0-78512-281-8

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Ghost Rider
CONTINUED
50 12
51-68 5
69-80 4
81 10

Giant-Size Avengers
MARVEL, 1974
1 30
2 25
3-4 20
5 15

... Captain America
MARVEL
1 20

... Captain Marvel
MARVEL
1 16

... Chillers
MARVEL, 1974
1 25
➥1st Lilith

... Chillers
MARVEL, 1975
1 20
2-3 15

... Conan
MARVEL, 1974
1 16
2 10
3 7
4-5 6

... Creatures
MARVEL, 1974
1 25

... Daredevil
MARVEL, 1975
1 15

... Defenders
MARVEL, 1974
1 20
2-3 10
4-5 7

... Doc Savage
MARVEL, 1975
1 10

... Doctor Strange
MARVEL, 1975
1 15

... Dracula
MARVEL, 1974
2 22
➥was GS Chillers
3-4 15
5 20
➥1st Marvel Byrne

... Fantastic Four
MARVEL, 1974
1 20
2 12

UNSLABBED Near Mint

3 10
4 12
5-6 10

... Hulk
MARVEL, 1975
1 23

... Hulk
MARVEL, 2006
1 8

... Invaders
MARVEL, 1975
1 15
➥G.A. Subby origin

... Iron Man
MARVEL, 1975
1 17

... Kid Colt
MARVEL, 1975
1 27
2-3 20

... Man-Thing
MARVEL, 1974
1 15
2 9
3 12
4 10
5 12

... Marvel Triple Action
MARVEL, 1975
1 15
2 12

... Master of Kung Fu
MARVEL, 1974
1 17
2 12
3-4 10

... Power Man
MARVEL, 1975
1 20

... Spider-Man
MARVEL, 1974
1 35
2-3 12
4 45
➥Punisher app
5 12
6 15

... Super-Heroes
MARVEL, 1974
1 25

... Super-Stars
MARVEL, 1974
1 20

... Super-Villain Team-Up
MARVEL, 1975
1 17
2 10

... Thor
MARVEL, 1975
1 20

... Werewolf By Night
MARVEL, 1974
2 20
3-5 15

... X-Men
MARVEL, 1975
1 800
➥1st new X-Men
2 80
3-4 5

RetroView BIG TOWN™

Reviewed by Michelle Nolan

In retrospect, it's surprising that *Big Town* lasted as long as it did as a DC comic book, since the six-year run of the television show ended in October 1956, and the once hugely popular radio show had ended four years earlier. Lorelei Kilbourne, Steve Wilson's assistant and love interest, was written out of the television series for the final season. DC also decided to dispense with Lorelei, and that weakened the comic-book series, too. Lorelei's last appearance on a cover was #36 (Dec. 55). Even so, *Big Town* was an unusual comic book after the end of the television series. No other title of the 1957-58 period featured the exploits of a fighting journalist, once such a staple of radio and pulp stories in addition to comics.

Big Town ™ DC.

COST TO OWN THE ORIGINALS IN NM: **$250**

UNSLABBED Near Mint

G.I. Combat
DC, 1957
44 500
45 300
46 250
47 225
48-50 100
51-54 85
55 125
56-60 85
61-66 70
67 125
➥1st Tank Killer
68 400
69-86 70
87 300
➥1st Haunted Tank
88-100 55
101-110 45
111-113 38
114 75
➥Haunted Tank origin
115-120 28
121-140 22
141-145 8
146-150 10
151-160 8
161-180 7
181-200 5
201-250 4
251-288 3

G.I. Joe
IMAGE, 2001
1-3 3
4 4
5-22 3
22/Graham 12
23-25 3

G.I. Joe
DEVIL'S DUE, 2004
26-35 3
35/Variant 4
36-42 3

G.I. Joe, A Real American Hero
MARVEL, 1982
1 14
2 8
3-9 4
10 6
11-13 4
14 5

UNSLABBED Near Mint

15-18 4
19 6
20 4
21 15
➥Silent issue
22-55 4
56 5
57 3
58 4
59-151 3
152-154 7
155 16
➥Low circulation
YB 1 3
YB 2-4 2
Special 1 20

Gorgo
CHARLTON, 1961
1 200
2-3 100
4 75
5 50
6-10 40
11-16 30
17-23 20

Green Hornet Comics
HARVEY, 1940
1 4500
2 1500
3 1250
4-6 1000
7 900
8 750
9 900
10 650
11-19 600
20 700
21-31 400
32-38 300
39 350
40-47 250

Green Lama
SPARK, 1944
1 750
2 475
3 340
4-5 240
6-8 180

Green Lantern
DC, 1941
1 37500
➥Grn Lantern origin

UNSLABBED Near Mint

2 7500
3 5500
4 4000
5 2750
6 2250
7-10 2000
11-20 1500
21-30 1250
31-34 1000
35-38 1250

Green Lantern
DC, 1960
1 4500
➥1st Guardians
2 1000
3 600
4-5 450
6 400
7-10 300
11-12 200
13 250
14-16 175
17-20 150
21-27 125
28-30 100
31-39 75
40 350
➥GA Lantern app.
41-49 75
50-51 60
52 80
53-58 55
59 125
➥1st Guy Gardner
60-75 50
76 375
➥Green Arrow starts
77-78 75
79-84 60
85 50
86 60
➥Drug issue
87 50
88 30
89 45
90-92 10
93-99 9
100 10
101 9
102-111 4
112 8
113-115 3
116 8
117-121 3
122 4

UNSLABBED Near Mint

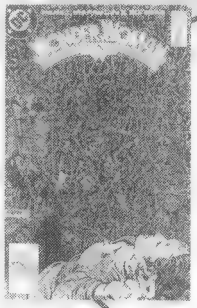
123 6
124-130 3
131-135 2
136-139 3
140 2
141 5
➥1st Omega Men
142-144 3
145-149 2
150 5
151-173 2
174 3
175-178 2
179 3
180-193 2
194 3
195 4
196-205 2
Special 1-2 3

Grendel
COMICO, 1983
1 45
2 35
3 26

Grendel
COMICO, 1986
1 5
2-5 4
6-15 3
16 4
17-32 3
33 4
34-39 3
40 4

Groo the Wanderer
MARVEL, 1985
1 5
2-3 4
4-30 3
31-49 2
50 3
51-99 2
100 3
101-120 2

Haunted
CHARLTON, 1971
1 12
2-3 6
4-6 5
7-10 4
11-75 3



△ #29

WONDER WOMAN

More than one way to skin a cat

Two previous incarnations of The Cheetah had harassed the original Wonder Woman, but they were simply villainesses in cheetah-like costumes. A new version of the female foe emerged early in *Wonder Woman* (2nd series), using a potion to actually become a cheetah.

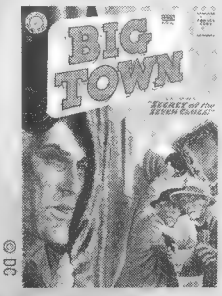
Fights Cheetah ▼ Origin of Cheetah ▼ Shim'Tar appears ▼

	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
	JAN 89	FEB 89	MAR 89	APR 89	MAY 89	JUN 89	JUL 89	AUG 89	SEP 89	OCT 89
NM Price	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2

image © 1989 DC

THE BOTTOM LINE

Big Town #46 ★★★



"The Man Who Bombed Big Town!" • 8 pp.

Ace reporter Paul Courtney uses his outstanding memory to locate the bomber who has been terrorizing Big Town.

Steve Wilson appears in only a cameo role in a story that seems more fit for today than for nearly half a century ago.

"The Secret of the Seven Clues!" • 8 pp.

"Underground Trail of Peril!" • 8 pp.

"Foreign Press!" • 1 pp.

"Odd News Items" • 1 pp.

"Fingerprint Oddities!" • 1 pp.

DC
Aug 1957
Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Uncredited
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Jerry Grandenetti

In CGC copies **Then 10¢ NOW $50**

Haunt of Fear
EC, 1950

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 2750
2-3 1000
4 750
5 550
6 425
7-9 400
10 375
11-13 300
14 450
15-18 300
19 375
20 300
21-28 250

Herbie
ACG, 1964

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 95
2 60
3-5 48
6-7 40
8 50
9-10 38
11-23 30

Hero for Hire
MARVEL, 1972

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 125
2 30
3 14
4-6 12
7-9 9
10 8
11-16 9

Hong Kong Phooey
CHARLTON, 1975

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 40
2 20
3-9 10

Hot Wheels
DC, 1970

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 45
2 30
3-5 24
6 30

House of M
MARVEL, 2005

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 4
1/Quesada 30
1/DirCut 4

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1/Madurera 12
1/Gatefold 5
2 3
2/Dodson 25
3 6
➥Hawkeye returns
3/Cassaday 20
4 3
4/Peterson 15
5 5
5/McKone 15
6 3
6/Land 15
7 4
8 3

House of Mystery
DC, 1951

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 2000
2 850
3 600
4-5 450
6-10 350
11-15 300
16-25 220
26-35 170
36-50 140
51-61 95
62 70
63 85
64 70
65 85
66-69 70
70 85
71-75 65
76 85
77-79 65
80-83 54
84-85 85
86-99 54
100 65
101-116 45
117-119 35
120 45
121-130 28
131-142 22
143 175
➥J'onn J'onzz starts
144 75
145-155 50
156 75
➥1st Robby Reed
157-159 50
160 90
➥1st S.A. Plastic Man
161 35
162-173 32
174 50
175 45
176-177 24
178 45
➥N. Adams art
179 60
➥1st Wrightson art
180-181 25
182 18
183 25
184 18
185 30
186 75
➥Wrightson art
187 20
188 30
189-190 20
191 25
192 20
193 25
194 30
195 45
➥Wrightson swamp man
196-201 20
202-203 14
204 20
205-206 12
207 40
➥Wrightson art
208 12
209-213 10
214-220 6
221 12
222-223 6
224 35
225-226 18
227 27
228-229 18
230-250 5
251-259 4
260-321 3

House of Secrets
DC, 1956

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 1500
2 550
3 450
4 350
5-7 200
8 230
9-12 200
13-15 125
16-20 110
21 85
22 80
23 100
➥1st Mark Merlin
24-30 80
31-50 65
51-60 52
61 125
➥1st Eclipso
62 60
63-65 50
66 65
➥Eclipso cover
67 40
68-79 36
80 45
81 55
➥1st Abel
82-84 20
85 32
86 20
87 45
➥Wrightson art
88-91 40
92 450
➥1st Swamp Thing
93-99 25
100 27
101-112 18
113-141 10
142-154 7

Hulk
MARVEL, 1999

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 4
1/A 5
1/Gold 4
2-11 3

Hulk
MARVEL, 1978
➥Magazine

UNSLABBED Near Mint
10-21 7
22-27 5

Human Torch
MARVEL, 1940

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 32000
2 7400
3 4800
4 3400
5 4650
6-7 2100
8 3400
9 2100
10 2750
11-15 1850
16-20 1250
21-30 1025
31-38 850

Identity Crisis
DC, 2004

UNSLABBED Near Mint
1 15
1/Sketch 225
1/DF 15
2 8
3 7
4 8
5 7
6 8
7 7
7/DF Morales 15
7/DF Turner 25

Incredible Hulk
MARVEL, 1962

UNSLABBED Near Mint
-1 2
1 13000
➥1st Hulk
2 3500
3 2000
4-5 1750
6 2250
102 150
103 100
104 75
105 70
106-112 50
113-115 40
116-121 35
122 55
➥Thing vs. Hulk
123-125 30
126-130 25
131 30
132 25
133 20
134-136 16
➥Harlan Ellison
➥1st Doc Samson
137-151 20
152 25
153-160 20
161 30
162 55
➥1st Wendigo
163-171 15
172 25
➥X-Men app.
173-176 15
177-178 17
179 16
180 180
➥Wolverine cameo
181 750
➥1st Wolverine story
181/Ace 5
182 100
➥2nd Wolverine
183 12
184-190 10
191-198 8
198/30¢ 20
199 8
199/30¢ 20
200 11
200/30¢ 30
201 7
201/30¢ 20
202 7
202/30¢ 20
203-212 7
212/35¢ 15
213 7
213/35¢ 15
214 7
214/35¢ 15
215 7
215/35¢ 15
216 7
216/35¢ 15
217-218 7
219-240 5

Original Art

Ghost-Incredible $

The Chet Kozlak Golden Age art find

Chet Kozlak worked on stories for DC from 1942 to 1947 as one of the many young artists hired during the war years and shared a studio with **Irwin Hasen**. Other artists gave Kozlak sample pages of the characters he would need to draw for an assortment of series. Unlike most artists, Kozlak kept those pages — and carried them with him when he returned to Minnesota in 1947. As such, the art escaped the fate of most Golden Age DC art, which usually was destroyed after publication to ensure it was not illegally reprinted in foreign markets.

Collector and art dealer **Joel Thingvall** met Kozlak in the 1970s and finally handled the sale of the art, when Kozlak became ill in the late 1990s. Interestingly, almost none of the art was by Kozlak. Though only three unpublished try-out pages and one Flash page exist of his own work, 45 DC pages by other artists were in the collection, including a rare group page featuring The Justice Society. Also included was art from *All-Star, Flash*, and other titles featuring Sandman (Kirby version), Doctor Fate, Green Lantern, Diana Prince, The Atom, Hawkman, Flash, Wyoming Kid, The King, and Scribbly. A complete list, including artist credits, appears in my posting in the "Original Art" forum at *www.cbgxtra.com*.

There is a page with Spectre on it from the Kozlak lot: exactly one panel — that's it. Starman — a couple of pages again from Kozlak. I've never seen early Sandman, though I believe a full Simon and Kirby story exist, since I have seen two pages from it. And I've never seen Hourman, though I've gone through a number of big collections of friends. Johnny Thunder also seems to be scarce. Several pages of Doctor Fate are mainly Kozlak. The later stuff — Flash, GL, Wonder Woman, Atom, Doctor Mid-Nite, even **Joe Kubert**'s Hawkman — while not as common as modern art, is nonetheless more plentiful. The fact that a lot of it is clipped into panels also helps, since then there are usually three pieces for every page, tripling the amount of material.

The headache here is that, once I write about this stuff, the price will go through the roof. My article a year ago about the relative scarcity of **Milton Caniff**'s *Terry and the Pirates* and *Steve Canyon* originals doubled the prices on nice *Canyons*. I own Caniff's "how to draw Canyon" from the artists course but don't own an early daily — and probably won't now!

Shown is a panel by **Jack Burnley** from the JSA group page.

*— **George Hagenauer** reports on the original art markets for **CBG**. Write him at **yellowkd@merr.com**.*

Superman appears — Lois Lane appears — Silver Swan appears — Troia appears — Colleen Doran art — Anniversary issue

	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
	NOV 89	DEC 89	JAN 90	FEB 90	MAR 90	APR 90	MAY 90	JUN 90	JUL 90	AUG 90	SEP 90	OCT 90	NOV 90	DEC 90	JAN 91
NM Price	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2

PRICE GUIDE KEY:
OTHER CGC GRADES

Slabbed CGC 9.8 (NM/M) is **3 times** the CGC 9.4 price above
CGC 9.0 (VF/NM) is **2/5 (40%)** of CGC 9.4
CGC 9.6 (NM+) is **1.5 times** CGC 9.4
CGC 8.0 (VF) is **1/5 (20%)** of CGC 9.4

Mythos: Hulk #1

Hasn't there already been a modern retelling of Hulk's origin? Wasn't it called *Hulk: Gray*? Aren't new comics supposed to cost $2.99? Pertinent questions all, but I digress ...

MARVEL
WRITER:
PAUL JENKINS
ARTIST:
PAULO RIVERA
COLOR • 32 PGS.
$3.99

Mythos: Hulk #1 does, indeed, re-imagine the famous Lee and Kirby tale of 1962, in which Bruce Banner is irradiated by a gamma ray test of his own design while saving the life of Rick Jones. This time, however, instead of sneaking into the government facility, Rick is an intern who simply didn't get the "scheduling memo." Wow, someone should get a demotion over that little oversight!

Faring better is The Hulk himself, who has a clear-cut reason for destroying every last remnant of the gamma project. He's simply reacting to General Ross, who intends to use gamma technology to build bigger, better bombs. In fact, Ross is the true villain of the piece, not Igor (who was a spy in the original tale).

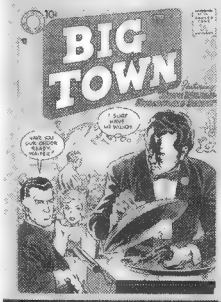
The painted art is atmospheric, sometimes to a fault. On the last page, Betty Ross resembles a demon-possessed suicide victim.

★★½ — **Brett Weiss**

www.marvel.com

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Incredible Hulk	
CONTINUED	
241-249	.4
250	.7
251-285	.3
286	.4
287-295	.3
296	.5
297	.4
298-299	.3
300	.4
301-319	.3
320-323	.2
324	.5
325	.3
326	.4
327-328	.3
329	.2
➥1st McFarlane	
330-334	.5
335	.2
336-339	.3
340	.14
➥vs. Wolverine	
341	.4
342-349	.2
350	.5
➥1st Dale Keown	
351-371	.2
372	.3
373-376	.2
377-378	.3
379-384	.2
385	.4
386	.3
387-391	.2
392	.3
393	.4
394	.3
395-399	.2
400	.3
401-418	.2
418/Variant	.3
419-425	.2
425/Variant	.4
426-448	.2
449	.8
450	.5
451-474	.2
Ann 1	.115
Ann 2	.40
Ann 3-4	.25
Ann 5	.9
Ann 6	.7
Ann 7	.9
Ann 8	.5
Ann 9	.3
Ann 10	.4
Ann 11-19	.3
Ann 20	.4
Ann '97-'98	.3
Ashcan 1	.1
Incredible Hulk	
MARVEL, 1999	
➥Cont'd from Hulk	
12-20	.3
21-24	.2
25	.3
26-33	.2
34	.13
➥Bruce Jones starts	
35	.6
36-38	.5
39-41	.4
42-46	.3
47-49	.2
50	.5
51	.4
52-54	.3
55-63	.2
64	.3
65-66	.2
67-72	.3
73-74	.2
75-76	.4
77-82	.3
83	.5
83/2nd	.4
84	.3
84/2nd	.4
85-91	.3
92	.12
93-98	.3
Ann 1999	.5
Ann 2000	.4
Ann 2001	.3
Inferior Five	
DC, 1967	
1	.24
2	.16
3-10	.14
11-12	.10
Infinite Crisis	
DC, 2005	
1	.6
1/2nd	.4
1/RRP	.450
2-4	.6
5-7	.4
Infinite Crisis Secret Files 2006	
DC, 2006	
1	.12
Invincible	
IMAGE, 2003	
0	.1
1	.25
2-4	.12
5-11	.7
12-15	.5
16-24	.3
25	.5
26-35	.3
Iron Fist	
MARVEL, 1975	
1	.35
2	.12
3	.10
4	.8
4/30¢	.20
5	.8
5/30¢	.20
6	.8
6/30¢	.20
7-13	.8
13/35¢	.10
14	.80
➥1st Sabretooth	
14/35¢	.150
15	.27
➥X-Men app	
15/35¢	.75
Iron Man	
MARVEL, 1968	
1	.250
2-4	.60
5	.55
6-7	.50
8	.40
9	.90
10	.42
11-12	.35
13-17	.27
18-20	.25
21-30	.20
31-40	.15
41-42	.12
43	.35
➥1st Guardsman	
44	.12
45-46	.15
47	.35
➥Barry Smith art	
48-50	.12
51	.17
52-53	.10
54	.16
55	.110
➥1st Thanos	
56-67	.15
68-85	.10
85/30¢	.20
86	.10
86/30¢	.20
87	.10
87/30¢	.20
88	.10
88/30¢	.20
89	.10
89/30¢	.20
90-97	.10
98-99	.8
99/35¢	.15
100	.12
100/35¢	.18
101	.7
101/35¢	.12
102	.7
102/35¢	.12
103	.7
103/35¢	.12
➥Alcoholism issue	
104-129	.7
130-149	.5
150	.7
151-153	.5
154	.7
155-159	.5
160	.7
161-170	.5
171-181	.3
182	.4
183-185	.3
186	.4
187-191	.3
192	.4
193-200	.3
201-224	.2
225-232/A	.3
233-243	.2
244	.3
245-250	.2
251-257	.1
258-280	.2
281-282	.3
283-284	.2
285-287	.1
288	.3
289	.1
290	.4
291-299	.1
300	.3
300/Variant	.4
301-304	.1
305-310	.2
310/Collector's	.3
311-316	.2
317	.3
318-324	.2
325	.3
326-332	.2
Ann 1	.27
Ann 2	.20
Ann 3	.10
Ann 4	.4
Ann 5-10	.3
Ann 11-13	.2
Ann 14-15	.3
Ashcan 1	.2
Iron Man	
MARVEL, 1996	
1-1/A	.3
2-11	.2
12	.4
13	.3
Iron Man	
MARVEL, 1998	
1-1/A	.4
2	.2
3-12	.2
13	.3
14-45	.2
46	.4
47-49	.2
50	.3
51-66	.2
67-83	.3
84	.8
85	.5
86-89	.3
Ann '98-'00	.4
Ann 2001	.3
Iron Man	
MARVEL, 2004	
1	.4
2-12	.3
Iron Man & Sub-Mariner	
MARVEL, 1968	
1	.100
JLA	
DC, 1997	
1	.6
2-6	.4
7-15	.3
16-40	.2
41	.3
42-49	.2
50	.4
51-74	.2
75	.4
76-99	.2
100	.4
101-106	.2
➥Post ID Crisis	
107-108	.5
➥Post ID Crisis	
109-114	.2
115	.12
➥ID Crisis follow-up	
116	.5
117-125	.3
1000000	.2
Ann 1	.6
Ann 2	.5
Ann 3	.4
GS 1-2	.5
GS 3	.6
JLA/Avengers	
MARVEL, 2003	
1	.7
3	.6
3/2nd	.7
John Carter, Warlord of Mars	
MARVEL, 1977	
1	.8
1/35¢	.15
2	.4
2/35¢	.8
3	.3
3/35¢	.8
4	.3
4/35¢	.8
5	.3
5/35¢	.8
6-28	.3
Ann 1-3	.2
Joker	
DC, 1975	
1	.16
2	.12
3-5	.8
6-9	.7
Jonah Hex	
DC, 1977	
1	.28
2	.10
3-5	.7
6	.6
7-8	.7
9-10	.5
11-20	.4
21-92	.3
Journey into Mystery	
MARVEL, 1952	
-1	.2
1	.3100
2	.950
3-4	.700
5	.800
6-11	.450
12-22	.350
23-32	.225
33	.250
34-40	.225
41-49	.200
50	.160
51-61	.155
62	.250
63-71	.145
72	.140
73	.200
74-81	.140
82	.160
83	.4500
➥1st Thor	
83/Golden	.60
84	.725
85	.450
86	.400
87	.600
88	.250
89	.300
90	.150
91-92	.130
93	.160
94-96	.130

RETROVIEW
Big Town #47 ★★½



"The Man with the Million Dollar Memory!" • 8 pp.

The TV quiz show craze provides the background, when a contestant is kidnapped to take advantage of his memory in order to locate a $1 million stash.

Steve Wilson's clever deductive powers save both the contestant and the quiz show from disaster in a story in which the fighting editor is more crime fighter than journalist.

"Steve Wilson, Underworld Decoy!" • 6 pp.

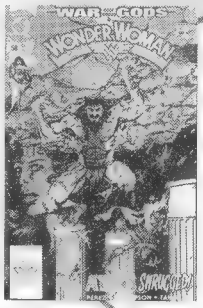
"The Diamonds of Peril!" • 10 pp.

"Newspaper Flashes!" • 1 pp.

DC
Oct 1957
Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Uncredited
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Gil Kane

No CGC copies

Then 10¢ NOW $50



△ #58

WONDER WOMAN

Good god!

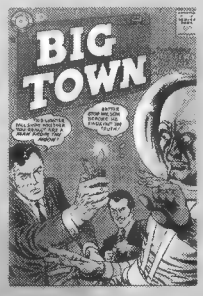
Wonder Woman's ties to the mythical gods were tested in the "War of the Gods" event which attempted to define the roles of the various pantheons in the DC universe. Another major player in the event was, of course, Captain Marvel.

Image © 1991 DC

THE BOTTOM LINE

	Hermes appears		Pariah appears	Dr. Psycho appears				"War of the Gods" tie-ins		
51 FEB 91	52 MAR 91	53 APR 91	54 MAY 91	55 JUN 91	56 JUL 91	57 AUG 91	58 SEP 91	59 OCT 91	60 NOV 91
NM Price $2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2

Big Town #48 ★★★½



"Mystery of the Moon Man!" • 8 pp.

Steve Wilson is convinced a man from the moon is really a fake after seeing him squint into a flashbulb the first time he's photographed.

This entertaining epic developed because, at the dawn of the Space Age, DC found a way to insert space themes into many of its comics — even Big Town.

"Find Witness X!" • 8 pp.

"The Dangerous Coat of Dan Brewster!" • 8 pp.

"Headline Heroes" • 1 pp.

"Odd News Items" • 1 pp.

DC
Dec 1957
Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Uncredited
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Gil Kane

No CGC copies

Then 10c NOW $50

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
97	.325
98	.120
99	.105
100	.115
101	.150
102-108	.75
109	.90
110-111	.75
112	.210
➥Thor vs. Hulk	
113-114	.75
115	.90
116	.75
117-125	.70
503-521	.2
Ann 1	.150

Journey into Mystery
MARVEL, 1972

1	.17
2-3	.7
4-5	.6
6-19	.5

JSA
DC, 1999

1	.5
2-36	.3
37	.4
38-49	.3
50	.4
51-57	.3
58	.4
59-66	.3
67	.7
➥Identity Crisis tie	
68	.5
69-70	.4
71	.3
72	.4
73	.5
➥Inf. Crisis tie	
74	.4
➥Inf. Crisis tie	
75-87	.3
Ann 1	.5

JSA: Classified
DC, 2005

1/Conner	.16
1/Hughes	.24
1/Sketch	.7
2	.9
2/Sketch	.4
3-4	.5
5-16	.3

Judomaster
CHARLTON, 1966

89	.12
90-98	.9

Jungle Action
MARVEL, 1972

1	.15
2-4	.7
5	.35
➥Black Panther begins	
6	.12
7	.8
8	.15
9	.7
10-16	.6
17-21	.5
21/30¢	.20
22	.5
22/30¢	.20
23-24	.5

Justice League
DC, 1987

1	.6
2-3	.3
3/Ltd.	.10
4	.3
5-6	.2
Ann 1	.3

Justice League Adventures
DC, 2002

1	.3
2-34	.2

Justice League America
DC, 1989

0-50	.2
51-68	.1
69	.3
70-99	.2
100	.3
100/Variant	.4
101-113	.2
Ann 4-8	.3
Ann 9	.4
Ann 10	.3
Special 1	.2
Special 2	.3

Justice League of America
DC, 1960

1	.5000
2	.1250
3	.1000
4	.700
5	.600
6-8	.400
9	.1000
➥JLA origin	
10	.400
11-15	.250
16-20	.225
21	.350
➥Earth-2 visit	
22	.325
23-30	.150
31	.100
32-33	.90
34-36	.75
➥Supes vs. Cap. Mrv.	
37-39	.125
40-41	.75
42-45	.60
➥1st SA Sandman	
46	.110
➥JSA app.	
47	.95
48	.140
➥Giant issue	
49-52	.60
53-54	.55
55	.115
➥JSA team-up	
56	.100
➥JSA team-up	
57-62	.55
63-66	.45
67	.60
➥Giant	
68	.50
69-72	.45
➥Giant	
73-81	.35
82	.45
➥G.A. Batman app.	
83-84	.30
85	.40
➥Giant	
86-90	.25
91	.35
92	.32
93	.25
➥Giant	
94	.60
➥Sandman origin	
95-99	.20
100	.65
101-106	.20
107-108	.25
109	.20
110-116	.25
117-125	.15
126-136	.10
137	.20
138-150	.7
151-165	.5
166-167	.12
168	.25
➥Mindwipe story	
169-199	.5
200	.7
201-217	.3
218	.4
219	.3
220	.4
221-226	.3
227	.4
228-260	.3
261	.4
Ann 1	.5
Ann 2-3	.4

Kid Eternity
QUALITY, 1946

1	.560
2	.290
3	.250
4-5	.175
6-10	.135
11-18	.105

King Kong
GOLD KEY, 1968

1	.12

Korak, Son of Tarzan
GOLD KEY, 1964

1	.65
2-5	.45
6-11	.30
12-18	.25
19-37	.20
38-46	.17
47-51	.15
52-59	.10

Leading Comics
DC, 1941

1	.3500
2	.1100

"War of the Gods" — Goes to $1.25 — 1st Natasha Teranova — Fights White Magician

	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
	JAN 92	FEB 92	JUN 92	JUL 92	AUG 92	SEP 92	OCT 92	NOV 92	DEC 92	JAN 93	FEB 93	MAR 93	APR 93	MAY 93	JUN 93
NM Price	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2

PRICE GUIDE KEY: OTHER CGC GRADES
Slabbed CGC 9.8 (NM/M) is **3 times** the CGC 9.4 price above
CGC 9.0 (VF/NM) is **2/5 (40%)** of CGC 9.4
CGC 9.6 (NM+) is **1.5 times** CGC 9.4
CGC 8.0 (VF) is **1/5 (20%)** of CGC 9.4

December Comics Birthdays

Dec. 2
Jack Davis (1924)
Tim Corrigan (1950)
Andy Mangels (1966)

Dec. 3
Leonard Dworkins (Leon Gordon) (1921)
John Warner (1952)
Mike Saenz (1959)
Donald Simpson (1961)

Dec. 4
Dennis Yee (1955)
Geoff Isherwood (1960)
Jill (Beth) Miller (1965)
Ashley Holt (1968)

Dec. 5
Sam Glanzman (1924)
Daniel Howard Fogel (1965)

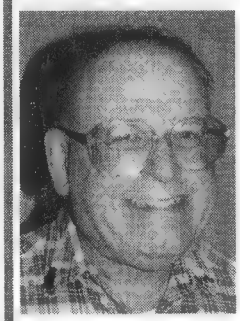
Dec. 6
Frank Springer (1929)
Marlene Stevens (1946)
Ken Macklin (1954)
Robin Riggs (1961)
Valarie Jones (1961)
Scott Beaderstadt (1962)
Leonard Kirk (1966)

Dec. 8
Michael Hobson (1936)
Jonathan Peterson (1960)
Erik Larsen (1962)
Mike Mulvihill (1962)
John Mundt (1965)

Dec. 9
Jose Delbo (1933)
Gary T. Kato (1949)
David C*J Bunn (1953)

Dec. 10
Bill Crooks (1917)
Dan Spiegle (1920)
Sal Quartuccio (1952)
Matt Tolbert (1954)
Chas Truog (1959)

Dec. 11
Richard Rockwell (1920)
Morrie Turner (1923)
John Buscema (1927)



Frederick Patten (1940)

Dec. 12
Dan DeCarlo (1919)
Fred Kida (1920)
Doug Marlette (1949)
Mark Landman (1953)
Paul McCusker (1953)
Bill Kieffer (1963)

Dec. 13
Greg Shoemaker (1961)
Kyle Baker (1965)

Dec. 14
Deborah Purcell (1952)
David Quinn (1959)

Dec. 15
Kurt Schaffenberger (1920)
Ed Quinby (1952)
J. Marc DeMatteis (1953)
Steven Bove (1957)
Ted Slampyak (1965)

Dec. 16
Clem Robins
Otto Soglow (1900)
Steve Mattsson (1959)
Dean Clarrain (1959)
Jose Collado (1968)
John Nadeau (1971)

Dec. 17
Andy Mushynsky (1948)
Greg Walker (1949)
Ronn Sutton (1952)
Michael Cherkas (1954)

Beau Smith (1954)
Matthew Hollingsworth (1968)

Dec. 18
Bill Neville (1952)
Ted Boonthanakit (1956)
Gary Fields (1961)

Dec. 19
David Scroggy (1951)
Peter Gillis (1952)
Eliot Brown (1954)
Lurene Haines (1958)
Eric Hess (1962)

Dec. 20
James Van Hise (1949)
Dave Simons (1954)

Dec. 21
Chris Marrinan
Bob Bindig (1920)
John Severin (1921)
Glen Johnson (1959)
Doug Wheeler (1960)
Mark Engblom (1965)

Dec. 22
Gregory Wright
Ed McGeean (1928)
Tony Isabella (1951)
Bill Willingham (1956)
Richard Klaw (1967)

Dec. 23
Rick Magyar
Phil Felix (1954)
Tony Caputo (1957)
Edward K. Keller (1963)
Jeff Whiting (1964)
Noel John Tominack (1967)

Dec. 24
Tim Harkins (1958)
Wade Winningham (1966)

Dec. 25
Joe Rosen (1920)

Dec. 26
Steve Saffel (1956)

Dec. 27
Jack Bradbury
John Celardo (1918)
Mark Bright (1955)
Bruce McCorkindale (1960)
Alan Jude Summa (1960)
Joan Hilty (1966)

Dec. 28
Tauby Calrow
Ralph Macchio

Stan Lee (1922)
Janice Chiang (1955)

Dec. 29
Paul Becton (1952)
Jay Geldhof (1960)
Barry Dutter (1964)
Joe Doughrity (1969)
Dave Ulanski (1970)

Dec. 30
Lewis Shiner (1960)

Dec. 31
Fabian Nicieza
Bunny Hampton-Mack (1952)
Lela Dowling (1956)
Steve Rude (1956)
Robert de Jesus (1967)

Incredible-Leading $

Onimusha
Vol. 1

In the latest retelling of the familiar manga tale about the Yagyu clan, Jubei-Akane has earned the right to inherit the mantle of best swordsman. Except she's a girl who also can identify demons with her red eye. Moreover, she tangles with the horn-headed warrior Hideyasu, who seeks vengeance upon his power-mad father, the regent of Japan, and his demonic minions.

UDON
WRITER:
MITSURU OHSAKI
ARTIST:
MITSURU OHSAKI
B/W • 200 Pgs.
$12.95

Perhaps both of them can join forces as demon slayers (aka *onimusha*) to combat the rising threat to the land — the hellish Genma. But will Akane's grandfather Lord Yagyu be able to bestow upon her the sacred blade in time, or will her traitorous uncle Munenori seize it and become the clan's next leader?

Based on the Capcom videogame series, this manufactured marketing story is the "genesis" to the newest game. Having enjoyed success with its other Capcom tie-ins, Udon joins the fray in producing right-to-left-reading manga. But here the art isn't as inspired as in the *Streetfighter* or *Darkstalkers* series, and the script seems even more convoluted.

★★½ — **Oliver Chin**

www.capcomcomics.com
ISBN: 0-97386-525-3

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Leading Comics
CONTINUED
3 850
4-5 675
6-10 580
11-15 440
16-22 70
23 110
24-30 55
31-41 40

League of Extraordinary Gentlemen
DC, 1999
1 8
1/A-2 5
3-5 4
5/A 65
➥Recalled edition
6 4

League of Extraordinary Gentlemen
DC, 2002
1-6 4

Legion of Monsters
MARVEL
1 35

Legion of Super-Heroes
DC, 1973
1 15
2 8
3-4 7

Legion of Super-Heroes
DC, 1980
259 4
260-270 3
271-284 2
285 3
286-296 2
297 3
298-309 2
310 3
311-313 2
Ann 1 3
Ann 2-3 2

Legion of Super-Heroes
DC, 1984
1 5
2-5 4
6-36 2
37-38 5
39-44 2
45 3
46-63 2
Ann 1 3
Ann 2-3 2
Ann 4 3

Legion of Super-Heroes
DC, 1989
0 2
1 3

UNSLABBED Near Mint

2-37 2
38 3
39-49 2
50 4
51-53 2
54 3
55-99 2
100 6
101-108 2
109-123 3
1000000 4
Ann 1 5
Ann 2-6 4
Ann 7 3

Legion of Super-Heroes
DC, 2005
1 4
2-15 3
➥Becomes Supergirl and the ...

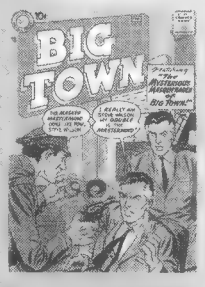
Limited Collectors' Edition
DC, 1973
C-20 32
➥Rudolph
C-21 16
C-22 14
C-23 16
C-24 26
➥Rudolph
C-25 28
➥Batman
C-27 16
C-29 10
C-31 15
C-32 10
C-33 16
C-34 12
C-35 10
C-36 16
C-37 20
➥Batman
C-38-C-39 10
C-40 12
C-41-C-43 10
C-44 12
C-45-C-47 10
C-48 12
C-49-C-50 10
C-51 12
C-52 10
C-57-C-59 14

Lone Ranger
DELL, 1948
1 660
2 360
3 265
4-5 230
6-7 195
8 275
➥Lone Ranger origin
9-10 195
11-20 138
21-30 100
31-40 75
41-50 58
51-60 50
61-70 48
71-80 38
81-100 34
101-111 30
112 55
113-117 45
118 50
119-145 45

Magnus, Robot Fighter
GOLD KEY, 1963
1 200
2-3 125
4-10 60
11-20 35
21-28 20

RETROVIEW
Big Town #49

★★★½



"The Secret Reporter of *The Illustrated Press*!" • 8 pp.

Wiley Harris, "crack newshawk of *The Illustrated Press*," helps locate a missing scientist and helps Steve Wilson solve the mystery of why a rival paper is running the same story.

Steve Wilson again plays a cameo role, as one of his reporters nicely solves a mystery-within-a-mystery in this well-written tale.

"The Mysterious Masquerader of Big Town!" • 8 pp.

"The Case of the Counterfeit Clue!" • 8 pp.

"Newspaper Flashes" • 1 pp.

"Headline Heroes" • 1 pp.

DC
Feb 1958
Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Uncredited
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Gil Kane

© DC

➥ CBG copies — **Then 10¢ NOW $50**

UNSLABBED Near Mint

29-45 10
45/Whitman 18
46 10

Magnus Robot Fighter
VALIANT, 1991
0/Card 40
0/No card 30
1 10
2 8
3-4 5
➥Flip-book w/Rai #1
5-6 6
7-8 4
9-10 3
11 6
12 20
➥1st Valiant Turok
13-16 3
17-21 2
21/Gold 20
22-25 2
25/VVSS 15
26-35 1
36 2
37-43 1
44 3
45-54 2
55-57 3
57/error 10
58-60 3
61-62 4
63 5
64 12
YB 1 5

Man-Thing
MARVEL, 1974
1 30
2 14
3 10
4 8
5 10
6-10 5
11-22 3

Marvel Collectors' Item Classics
MARVEL, 1966
1 125
2 70
3-4 45
5-6 30
7-10 15
11-20 12

UNSLABBED Near Mint

21-22 17
23 20

Marvel Family
FAWCETT, 1945
1 1100
2 525
3 425
4-5 315
6-10 265
11-20 200
21-30 165
31-40 135
41-70 100
71-81 85
82-89 75

Marvel Mystery Comics
MARVEL, 1939
2 30000
3 15000
4 12500
5 22500
6-7 7500
8 10000
9 25000
10 8000
11 3800
12 4000
13 5000
14-17 2500
18 2250
19-20 2500
21 2000
22-25 1700
26-30 1475
31-41 1325
42-48 1125
49 1450
50 1125
51-67 1000
68-78 860
79 810
80 1275
81 975
82 2250
83 810
84 1250
85 810
86 890
87 785
88-91 950
92 2500

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Marvel Premiere
MARVEL, 1972
1 35
2 12
3 30
➥Dr. Strange
4 10
5-6 8
7 15
8 10
9 6
10 9
11-12 5
13 8
14 12
15 80
➥1st Iron Fist
16 20
➥2nd Iron Fist
17-18 12
19-24 10
25 15
26 4
27 10
28 13
29 3
29/30¢ 20
30 3
30/30¢ 20
31 3
31/30¢ 20
32-36 3
36/35¢ 15
37 3
37/35¢ 15
38 3
38/35¢ 15
39-49 3
50 13
➥1st Alice Cooper
51-56 3
57 5
58-61 3

Marvel Spotlight
MARVEL, 1971
1 25
2 130
➥1st Werewolf
3-4 30
5 275
➥1st Ghost Rider
6 45
7 35
8 25

UNSLABBED Near Mint

9 30
10 35
11-12 22
13 12
14-15 10
16-19 7
20-21 5
22 6
23-24 5
25-27 3
27/30¢ 20
28 10
28/30¢ 18
29 9
29/30¢ 15
30-31 3
32 50
➥1st Spider-Woman
33 3

Marvel Super-Heroes
MARVEL, 1966
12 95
➥1st Captain Mar-vell
13 50
14 75
➥Reprints 1st Kirby
15 42
16 25
17 30
18 40
➥1st Guardians
19 20
20 35
21-27 12
28-30 10
31 20
32 6
33-45 4
46-57 3
57/30¢ 20
58 3
58/30¢ 20
59-65 3
65/35¢ 15
66 3
66/35¢ 15
67-80 3
81-105 2
Special 1 40
➥1966 one-shot

Marvel Team-Up
MARVEL, 1972
1 185

△ #83

WONDER WOMAN

Bodacious Bolland

British artist Brian Bolland produced a number of memorable covers for *Wonder Woman* that showed the Amazon in battle and in jeopardy. At least one was made into a poster by DC and several were featured in a cover gallery collection.

Image © 1994 DC

Fate appears | JLA appears | Mayfly appears | Flash appears | Ares appears | Goes to $1.50 | Mike Deodato's first U.S. work

	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85
NM Price	JUL 93 $2	AUG 93 $2	SEP 93 $2	OCT 93 $2	NOV 93 $2	DEC 93 $2	JAN 94 $2	FEB 94 $2	MAR 94 $2	APR 94 $10

THE BOTTOM LINE

Big Town #50 ★★★

© DC

DC
Apr 1958
Writer: Uncredited
Pencils: Uncredited
Inks: Uncredited
Cover: Gil Kane

"Mystery of the Time Capsule!" • 8 pp.

Steve Wilson figures out a way to defeat jewel thieves who place their ill-gotten gains inside a robot destined to be placed in a time capsule.

This story cleverly inserts two elements popular in the day, robots and time capsules, in an otherwise routine crime yarn.

"The Secret beyond the Footlights!" • 8 pp.

"Peril out of the Past!" • 8 pp.

"Famous Newspaper Firsts/Quotes" • 1 pp.

"Odd News Items" • 1 pp.

No CGC copies

Then 10¢ NOW $50

Leading-Not $

	UNLISTED Near Mint
8/Gold	.15
9-10	.10
11-12	.14
13	.18
14	.24
15	.35
16	.16
17	.25
17/Gold	.40
18	.20
19-22	.15
23	.16
24	.25
3D 1	.10
3D 1/Gold	.18

More Fun Comics
DC, 1936
➥Was New Fun

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
7-8	.5600
9	.6500
10	.3250
11	.2850
12-13	.2450
14	.12500
➥1st Dr. Occult	
15-16	.5000
17	.4500
18-20	.2150
21-25	.1950
26-29	.1775
30-40	.1625
41-45	.1325
46-50	.1200
51	.5000
➥Spectre cameo	
52	.54000
➥1st Spectre story	
53	.35000
54	.9700
55	.12400
➥1st Dr Fate	
56	.4400
57-59	.3100
59/15¢	.4500
60	.3100
61-64	.2500
65-66	.2660
67	.6850
68-70	.2100
71	.5750
72	.1725
73	.12200
➥1st Aquaman, G.A.	
74	.2450
75-80	.1725
81-88	.1150
89	.1325
90-99	.940
100	.1060
101	.7850
➥1st Superboy	
102	.1375
103	.1025
104-105	.760
106-107	.650
108-110	.165
111-120	.140
121-124	.115
125	.575
➥Superman cover	
126	.115
127	.225

Ms. Marvel
MARVEL, 1977

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.8
2-6	.3
6/35¢	.15
7	.3
7/35¢	.15
8	.3
8/35¢	.15
9	.3
➥1st Mystique	
9/35¢	.15
10	.3
10/35¢	.15
11-15	.2
16	.15
➥Mystique cameo	
17	.8
18	.40
➥1st Mystique	
19	.3
20-23	.2

My Greatest Adventure
DC, 1955

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.1250
2	.600
3-4	.425
5-10	.325
11-14	.200
15-17	.250
18	.300
19	.200
20-21	.225
22-27	.175
28	.200
29-30	.150
31-40	.125
41-61	.100
62-79	.75
80	.425
➥1st Doom Patrol	
81-85	.150

Nature Boy
CHARLTON, 1956

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
3	.55
4-5	.50

New Avengers
MARVEL, 2005

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.7
1/Retailer ed.	.70
➥Spider-Man cover	
1/DirCut	.5
1/Quesada	.12
1/Finch	.9
1/2nd	.3
2	.2
2/Hairsine	.45
3	.2
3/Wolverine	.45
4	.3
4/Cheung	.15
4/DF	.20
5	.2
5/Granov	.15
6	.2
6/Hitch	.15
7	.7
7/Adams	.25
8	.3
8/Romita	.20
9	.3
9/Trimpe	.15
10-23	.3
Ann 1	.4

New Book of Comics
DC, 1937

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.13000
2	.6500

New Comics
DC, 1935

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.16000
2	.10000
3-7	.3000
8-11	.2750

New Funnies
DELL, 1942

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
65	.475
66-70	.255
71-75	.175
76	.550
77-80	.145
81-90	.115
91-100	.75
101-110	.54
111-120	.42
121-130	.34
131-150	.26
151-170	.18
171-190	.15
191-220	.12
221-240	.10
241-260	.8
272-288	.6

Nick Fury, Agent of SHIELD
MARVEL, 1968

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.75
2-5	.40
6-8	.30
9-13	.25
14	.20
15	.50
➥1st Bullseye	
16-18	.20

Nightwing
DC, 1996

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1/2	.4
1/2/Platinum	.7
1	.11
2	.6
3-5	.4
6-15	.3
16-49	.2
50	.4
51-98	.2
99	.3
100	.4
101-106	.5
➥Year 1	
107-108	.2
109-124	.3
1000000	.2
Ann 1	.5
GS 1	.6

Not Brand Echh
MARVEL, 1967

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.45
2	.18
3-5	.15
6-8	.10
➥Giant issues start	
9-13	.25

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
2	.30
3	.25
4	.45
➥X-Men app.	
5	.18
6-10	.16
11	.13
12	.18
➥Werewolf app.	
13-20	.13
21-31	.8
32-44	.5
44/30¢	.20
45	.5
45/30¢	.20
46	.5
46/30¢	.20
47	.4
47/30¢	.20
48	.4
48/30¢	.20
49-52	.4
53	.15
➥X-Men app.	
54-58	.4
58/35¢	.15
59	.4
59/35¢	.15
60	.4
60/35¢	.15
61	.4
61/35¢	.15
62	.4
62/35¢	.15
63-65	.4
66	.7
➥Captain Britain app.	
67-94	.4
95-99	.3
100	.6
101-136	.3
137	.4
138-143	.3
144	.4
145-150	.3
Ann 1	.30
Ann 2	.6
Ann 3	.4
Ann 4-6	.3
Ann 7	.2

Marvel Two-In-One
MARVEL, 1974

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.55
2	.15
3	.10
4	.7
5-6	.8
7-10	.5
11-15	.3
15/30¢	.30
16	.3
16/30¢	.30
17	.3
17/30¢	.30
18	.3
18/30¢	.30
19-25	.3
26-28	.2
28/35¢	.20
29	.2
29/35¢	.20
30	.2
30/35¢	.20
31	.2
31/35¢	.20
32-50	.2
51	.3
52-53	.2
54	.4
55-99	.2
100	.3
Ann 1	.4
Ann 2	.15
➥Warlock dies	
Ann 3-4	.2
Ann 5	.3
Ann 6-7	.2

Marvel Zombies
MARVEL, 2006

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.55
1/2nd	.35
1/3rd	.12
2	.16
3	.6
3/2nd	.4
4-5	.3

Master of Kung Fu
MARVEL, 1974

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
17	.15
18	.7
19-20	.6
21-31	.5
32-39	.4
39/30¢	.20
40	.3
40/30¢	.20
41	.3
41/30¢	.20
42	.3
42/30¢	.20
43	.3
43/30¢	.20
44-53	.3
53/35¢	.15
54	.3
54/35¢	.15
55	.3
55/35¢	.15
56	.3
56/35¢	.15
57	.3
57/35¢	.15
58-99	.3
100	.4
101-124	.2
125	.3
Ann 1	.20

Metal Men
DC, 1963

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.500
2	.225
3-5	.150
6-10	.80
11-20	.55
21-26	.45
27	.80
➥Metal Men	
28-30	.42
31-41	.24
42-44	.12
45-56	.6

Metamorpho
DC, 1965

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.75
2	.45
3	.40
4-9	.30
10-17	.25

Mickey Mouse
DELL, 1953

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
28-30	.40
31-35	.30
36-40	.25
41-50	.20
51-60	.16
61-70	.15
71-80	.14
81-100	.12
101-120	.11
121-140	.10
141-160	.8
161-180	.7
181-200	.6
201-203	.5
204	.8
205-206	.5
207	.20
208	.50
209	.20
210-214	.7
215-218	.10
219	.12
220	.4
221-240	.3
241-256	.2

Mickey Mouse and Friends
GEMSTONE, 2003

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
257-284	.3

Mighty Samson
GOLD KEY, 1964

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.75
2-4	.45
5-10	.30
11-20	.20
21-31	.15
32	.10

Military Comics
COMIC MAGAZINES, 1941

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.9000
2	.2700
3	.2150
4	.1600
5	.1375
6-7	.1110
8-10	.1000
11-12	.875
13-15	.760
16-20	.650
21-22	.560
23-43	.465

Miracleman
ECLIPSE, 1985

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.10
2-4	.8
4/Gold	.15
5	.8
5/Platinum	.15
6-8	.8

Flashback 2001

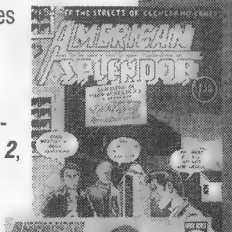
5 years ago in CBG...

#1464 DECEMBER 7 2001

DC announced a **JLA** and **JSA** crossover graphic novel illustrated by **Carlos Pacheco** with **Geoff Johns** and **David Goyer** writing. See the feature in ***CBG*** #1624 on the new ***JSA*** series written by Johns.

#1465 DECEMBER 14 2001

CBG ran its *2002 Comics Movie Preview*, featuring coverage of such films as ***Blade 2***, ***American Splendor***, ***Constantine***, ***Hellboy***, ***Men in Black 2***, ***Spider-Man***, ***X-Men 2***, and some films that have yet to make it to the silver screen — *Wonder Woman* and *Kabuki*.



#1466 DECEMBER 21 2001

Another '80s toy found its way into the comics pages, as ***Micronauts*** was licensed to **Devil's Due Publishing**, to be distributed through **Image Comics**.

#1467 DECEMBER 28 2001

CBG questioned whether the variant-cover fad was waning. In the front-page report, ***CBG*** cited publishers who said they were being more selective and, therefore, perhaps not adhering to variant practices to the same extent as in the past.

— By Ray Sidman
from the Comics Buyer's Guide archives

Superman appears

"Zero Month"

Fights Cheetah, Cheshire, Poison Ivy

Fights Joker

Variant edition produced

86	87	88	89	90	0	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
MAY 94	JUN 94	JUL 94	AUG 94	SEP 94	OCT 94	NOV 94	DEC 94	JAN 95	FEB 95	MAR 95	APR 95	MAY 95	JUN 95	JUL 95	JUL 95
$4	$3	$3	$3	$3	$6	$3	$3	$3	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$3

PRICE GUIDE KEY: OTHER CGC GRADES
Slabbed CGC 9.8 (NM/M) is **3 times** the CGC 9.4 price above
CGC 9.0 (VF/NM) is **2/5 (40%)** of CGC 9.4
CGC 9.6 (NM+) is **1.5 times** CGC 9.4
CGC 8.0 (VF) is **1/5 (20%)** of CGC 9.4

Prodigy #2

Prodigy's story is ambitious, but Joe Currie's reach probably exceeds his grasp. And, as much as I want to like Derrel Spicy's painted interiors, they fall just short of the professional polish needed for this story. Some panels look good, some not-so great.

STRICTLY UNDERGROUND
WRITER:
JOE R. CURRIE
ARTIST:
DERRELL SPICY
B/W • 40 Pgs.
$2.95

Prodigy is the code word for super-heroes in this universe. A secret government organization, blah, blah, blah, you know the drill. The interesting part is that the main character is married and her family is all part of the super-hero team of sorts. Other enjoyable elements include the ATF coming into play. It's not often you see a African-American female as the lead super-hero in a comic.

There's lots of super-hero action, but the story is much bigger than this issue. I'm not sure if that's helping Currie. I think he would've been better off focusing on the family dynamic of a few characters. Still, there are some interesting elements here and if you like super-heroes it's worth checking out.

★★ — **Tony DiGerolamo**

www.strictlyunderground comics.com

RetroView
JOHN CARTER WARLORD OF MARS

MARVEL COMICS

Reviewed by Tim Lasiuta

Almost simultaneous with Tarzan, there was John Carter. (Both made their debuts in *All-Story Magazine* in 1912.) Raised a Virginian gentleman and becoming a Confederate officer by choice in the Civil War, later, Carter and his prospecting partner James K. Powell were attacked by a group of Apaches. Fleeing the attack, Carter stumbled into a cave and fell unconscious. Rising from his body, he found himself on Mars and in the course of his adventures there became the leader of the Barsoomian people, husband to Dejah Thoris, and friend to Tars Tarkas. Based on Edgar Rice Burroughs' Martian novels, this series introduced a whole new generation to John Carter!

John Carter ™ Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc.

COST TO OWN THE ORIGINALS IN NM: **$28**

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Nova	
MARVEL, 1976	
1	.8
2	.4
3-10	.3
10/35¢	.15
11	.3
11/35¢	.15
12	.3
12/35¢	.15
13	.3
13/35¢	.15
14	.3
14/35¢	.15
15-25	.3
OMAC	
DC, 1974	
1	.40
2	.15
3	.12
4	.10
5-8	.7
OMAC Project	
DC, 2005	
1	.22
1/2nd	.7
1/3rd	.3
2	.6
2/2nd	.3
3	.4
4-6	.3
Our Army at War	
DC, 1952	
1	.1500
2	.750
3-4	.600
5-7	.500
8-11	.400
12	.325
13	.400
14	.325
15-19	.300
20	.275
21-31	.200
32-40	.175
41-50	.125
51-70	.100
71-80	.75
81	.2500
➥1st Sgt. Rock	
82	.650
83	.1800
➥1st Kubert Rock	
84	.300
85	.350
86-87	.300
88	.325
89-90	.300
91	.700
➥1st all-Rock issue	
92-100	.175
101-112	.125
113-118	.150
119	.125
120-121	.80
122-125	.75
126	.100
127	.75
128	.275
➥Sgt. Rock Origin	
129-133	.75
134-137	.60
138-150	.50
151	.350
➥1st Enemy Ace	
152	.50
153	.140
➥2nd Enemy Ace	
154	.40
155	.75
➥3rd Enemy Ace	
156-157	.40
158	.60
➥1st Iron Major	
159-163	.40
164	.80
➥Giant-sized	
165-167	.40
168	.90
➥1st Unknown Soldier	
169-176	.30
177	.50
178-181	.30
182-183	.40
184-185	.30
186	.40
187-189	.30
190	.40
191-198	.25
199-202	.20
203	.35
➥Giant	
204-215	.20
216	.55
➥Giant-sized	
217-228	.15
229	.35
➥Giant-sized	
230-234	.15
235-240	.25
241	.15
242	.20
➥100-page issue	
243-253	.15
254	.18
255	.15
256	.18
257	.15
258-271	.10
272	.15
273-301	.10
Phantom Stranger	
DC, 1952	
1	.1500
2	.1000
3-6	.750
Phantom Stranger	
DC, 1969	
1	.125
2-3	.60
4	.70
5-7	.50
8-13	.40
14-17	.35
18-21	.25
22-41	.15
Power Man & Iron Fist	
MARVEL, 1974	
17	.8
18-20	.5
21-30	.4
30/30¢	.20
31	.4
31/30¢	.20
32	.3
32/30¢	.20
33	.3
33/30¢	.20
34	.3
34/30¢	.20
35-44	.3
44/35¢	.15
45	.3
45/35¢	.15
46	.3
46/35¢	.15
47	.3
47/35¢	.15
48	.10
49-50	.6
51-52	.3
53-55	.4
56	.3
57	.12
58-65	.3
66	.20
➥2nd Sabretooth	
67-77	.2
78	.5
79-83	.2
84	.6
➥Sabretooth app.	
85-125	.2
Ann 1	.4
Primer	
COMICO, 1982	
1	.5
2	.55
➥1st Grendel	
3-4	.4
5	.50
➥1st Sam Kieth art	
6	.5
Rangers Comics	
FICTION HOUSE, 1941	
1	.2750
2	.850
3	.650
4-5	.500
6-12	.425
13-19	.350
20-24	.300
25-29	.250
30-39	.175
40-59	.120
60-69	.90
Rawhide Kid	
MARVEL, 1955	
1	.800
2	.350
3-5	.185
6-10	.140
11-16	.110
17	.400
➥Origin, Kirby art	
18-21	.95
22	.90
23	.200
➥Origin retold, Kirby	
24-30	.90
31-44	.75
45	.90
46	.60
47-60	.35
61-70	.25
71-86	.18
87-92	.15
93-99	.12
100	.18
101-113	.12
114-120	.10
121-133	.7
133/30¢	.20
134	.7
134/30¢	.20
135-140	.7
140/35¢	.15
141-151	.6
Special 1	.12
Red Sonja	
MARVEL, 1976	
1	.8
2-4	.3
4/35¢	.20
5	.3
5/35¢	.20
6	.3
7-15	.2
Red Sonja	
DYNAMITE COMICS, 2005	
0/Black-0/White	.3
0/Ross	.30
0/Sketch	.150
0/Foil	.10
0/Authentix	.20
0/DF	.25
1	.20
1/Rivera	.25
1/Adams	.35
1/Linsner	.125
1/Ross	.40
1/Rubi	.20
1/DF	.35
2-4	.0
5	.3
6-8	.0
Richie Rich	
HARVEY, 1960	
1	.3250
2	.950
3	.500
4-5	.375
6-9	.250
10	.175
11-15	.125
16-20	.90
21-30	.65
31-40	.45
41-49	.35
50-60	.25
61-70	.20
71-88	.15
89-102	.10
103-126	.7
127-159	.5
160-200	.3
201-254	.2
Rima, the Jungle Girl	
DC, 1974	
1	.13
2-7	.7
Rip Hunter... Time Master	
DC, 1961	
1	.350
2	.140
3	.115
4-5	.95
6-7	.85
8-15	.70
16-20	.58
21-25	.48
26-29	.40
Robin	
DC, 1993	
0	.2
1-1/Variant	.4
2-14	.2
14/Variant	.3
15-49	.2
50	.3
51-74	.2
75	.3
76-99	.2
100	.4
101-125	.2
126	.5
➥Robin quits	
127	.4
➥New Robin	
128	.3
129-139	.2
140-154	.3
1000000	.4
Ann 3	.3
Ann 4	.4
Ann 5	.3
Ann 6	.4
GS 1	.6
Sad Sack	
HARVEY, 1949	
1	.500
2	.250
3	.125
4-10	.100
11-19	.70
20	.50
21-30	.35
31-40	.25
41-50	.15
51-70	.10
71-90	.8
91-100	.5
101-150	.3
151-287	.2
288-289	.3
290-293	.2
3D 1	.125
Saga of the Swamp Thing	
DC, 1982	
1	.3
2-19	.2
20	.15
➥Alan Moore starts	
21	.12
22-25	.6
26-32	.4
33	.3
34	.5
35-36	.3
37	.55
➥1st Hellblazer	
38	.15
39-40	.9
41-45	.4
Ann 1	.3
Ann 2	.4
Ann 3	.3
Sandman	
DC, 1974	
1	.15
2	.7
3-6	.4

△ #101

WONDER WOMAN

Bringing on Byrne

After nearly 40 issues written by William Messner-Loebs, writer and artist John Byrne took over with *Wonder Woman* #101, which began the multi-part "Second Genesis" story arc, featuring appearances by Apokolips' ruler, Darkseid.

Image © 1995 DC

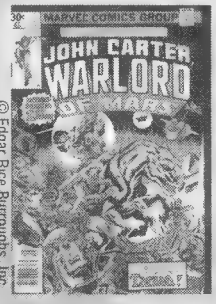
Goes to $1.95 | "Second Genesis"; Darkseid appears | Phantom Stranger appears | Fights fake Flash | Fights fake Sinestro

NM Price	101 SEP 95	102 OCT 95	103 NOV 95	104 DEC 95	105 JAN 96	106 FEB 96	107 MAR 96	108 APR 96	109 MAY 96	110 JUN 96
	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2

THE BOTTOM LINE

John Carter #1

★★★½



© Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc.

"Air Pirates of Mars, Part 1"

John Carter battles a small army to rescue Dejah Thoris from a Thark horde only to uncover a plot to destroy Barsoom.

From the opening panel, John Carter explodes into action, and the action just keeps going from there. His origin is told in the midst of a classic Gil Kane action sequence. Outside of a Gold Key one-shot and a short run in DC's *Tarzan* series, this issue marks many comics readers' first exposure to Carter, and it is a good one: great art, great story, and Gil Kane and Dave Cockrum turn in an incredibly designed and well-paced storyline. Welcome back, John Carter!

Marvel
Jun 1977 • 16 pp
Writer: Marv Wolfman
Pencils: Gil Kane
Inks: Dave Cockrum
Cover: Kane, Cockrum

last CGC copy **9.8** Then 30¢ NOW $6

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Sandman
DC, 1989
1 25
2-3 12
4-7 4
8 15
➥1st Death
8/Ltd. 35
9-14 4
15-21 3
22 4
23-49 3
50 5
50/Gold 20
51-74 3
75 4
Special 1 5

Savage Dragon
IMAGE, 1992
1-3 3

Savage Dragon
IMAGE, 1993
0 2
1/2 3
1/2/Platinum 4
1-3 3
4-12 2
13-13/A 3
14 2
15-24 3
25-25/A 4
26-49 3
50 6
51/A-74 3
75 6
76-99 3
100 9
101-106 3
107 4
108-123 3
125 5
126-128 3

Scooby Doo, Where Are You?
GOLD KEY, 1970
1 100
2-8 50
9-19 25
20-30 15

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Sea Devils
DC, 1961
1 500
2 300
3 200
4-5 125
6-13 75
14-20 50
21-35 35

Secret Agent
GOLD KEY, 1966
1 40
2 25

Secret Origins
DC, 1961
Ann 1 400

Secret Origins
DC, 1973
1 18
2 8
3-4 7
5-7 6

Secret Origins
DC, 1986
1 5
2-50 2
Ann 1 3
Ann 2-3 2
GS 1 5
Special 1 2

Secret Six
DC, 1968
1 45
2 15
3-5 12
6 15
7 20

Secret Society of Super-Villains
DC, 1976
1 10
2-8 5
9-15 3

Secret War
MARVEL, 2004
1 10

UNSLABBED Near Mint

1/2nd 5
1/3rd 4
2 6
2/2nd 4
3 5
4-5 4

Sensational Spider-Man
MARVEL, 1996
-1 2
0 5
1 2
1/Collector's 4
2-11 2
11/Collector's 7
12-24 2
25-25/A 3
26-33 2
Ann 1996 3

Sgt. Fury
MARVEL, 1963
1 1500
2 400
3-5 225
6-10 150
11-12 100
13 500
➥Cap. America app.
14-15 80
16-19 75
20-23 50
24 30
25-27 50
28-31 40
32-38 25
39-40 20
41-63 15
64-99 12
100 25
101 12
102 10
103-110 8
111-121 6
122-131 5
132-133 4
133/30¢ 20
134 4
134/30¢ 20
135-141 4
141/35¢ 15
142 4
142/35¢ 15
143-151 4
152-167 3

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Ann 1 125
Ann 2 55
Ann 3 30
Ann 4 22
Ann 5 10
Ann 6-7 9

Sgt. Rock
DC, 1977
302 25
303-307 15
308-312 10
313-320 8
321-330 6
331-341 5
342-350 4
351-390 3
391-422 2
Ann 1-2 4
Ann 3-4 3

Shadow
ARCHIE, 1964
1 30
2-8 18

Shadow
DC, 1973
1 12
2-3 8
4 6
5 4
6 5
7-12 4

Shazam!
DC, 1973
1 20
2-7 10
8 20
➥100-page issue
9-17 10
18-35 7

She-Hulk
MARVEL, 2004
1 12
2 7
3 4
4-12 3

She-Hulk
MARVEL, 2005
1-7 3
8 12
9-10 3

UNSLABBED Near Mint

SHIELD
MARVEL, 1973
1 15
2-5 5

Shogun Warriors
MARVEL, 1979
1 5
2-20 2

Showcase
DC, 1956
1 3500
2-3 1000
4 27500
➥1st Silver Age Flash
5 1000
6 4000
7 2000
8 11500
➥2nd SA Flash
9 7500
10 3000
11-12 1750
13-14 4500
15 2000
16 1000
17 2750
➥1st Adam Strange
18 1200
19 1500
20 1000
21 500
22 5600
➥1st SA Grn. Lantern
23-24 1750
25-26 350
27 900
28-29 400
30 800
31-32 400
33 375
34 1250
35 700
36 525
37 700
38 400
39 350
40 300
41-42 150
43 450
44 100
45 325
46-47 100
48-52 80
53-54 100
55 275
➥Dr. Fate origin
56 125
57 225
58 150
59 125
60 225
➥Spectre origin
61 100
62 80
63 50
64 100
➥Spectre app.
65 50
66-72 30
73 85
➥1st Creeper
74 45
➥1st Anthro
75 75
➥1st Hawk & Dove
76-77 50
78 35
79-81 45
82-84 40
85-87 20
88-93 15
94 20
➥New Doom Patrol
95-96 8
97-103 6
104 5

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Silver Surfer
MARVEL, 1968
1 375
2 160
3 135
4 265
➥Surfer vs. Thor
5-6 75
7 90
8 95
9-10 60
11 65
12 50
13 70
14 125
➥Spider-Man app
15-18 55

Simpsons Comics
BONGO, 1992
1 5
2 4
3-10 3
11-31 2
32 3
33-39 2
40-109 3

Sinister House of Secret Love
DC, 1971
1 125
2-4 75

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Six Million Dollar Man
CHARLTON, 1976
1 12
2 6
3-5 5
6-9 4

Six Million Dollar Man
CHARLTON
1 10
2 8
3-7 5

Skull the Slayer
MARVEL, 1975
1 12
2 5
3 2
4-5 4
5/30¢ 20
6 3
6/30¢ 20
7-8 3

Sonic the Hedgehog
ARCHIE, 1993
0 9
1 12
2-3 9
4-5 7
6-10 6

UNSLABBED Near Mint

11-20 4
21-50 3
51-166 2
Special 1 3
Special 2-15 2

Son of Satan
MARVEL, 1975
1 20
2 15
3 10
3/30¢ 15
4 10
4/30¢ 15
5 10
5/30¢ 15
6-8 10

Space Action
ACE, 1952
1 525
2-3 350

Space: 1999
CHARLTON, 1975
1 10
2-4 7
5-7 5

Space Adventures
CHARLTON, 1952
1 240
2 125
3-5 105
6-9 90

UNSLABBED Near Mint

10-12 225
13-19 90
20 110
21 80
23 100
24-32 70
33 325
➥1st Captain Atom
34 150
35-40 125
41 25
42 75
43-50 25
51-60 18
61-72 12

Space Family Robinson
GOLD KEY, 1962
1 225
2 100
3-5 75
6-10 50
11-15 35
16-20 25
21-44 20
45-54 10
55-59 6

Space Ghost
GOLD KEY, 1967
1 150

Nova-Space $

Flashback 1996

10 years ago in CBG...

#1203 DECEMBER 6 1996

Who would believe that **Walt Disney Pictures** paid a mid-six-figure sum for the rights to film ***Gen13***? ***CBG*** reported the story, along with news that **Jim Lee** would executive-produce the live-action film.

#1204 DECEMBER 13 1996

Image announced it would expand its line of black-and-white non-super-hero titles with ***The Adventures of Aaron*** and ***Soulwind***. The development of both books would be overseen by Image Vice President **Jim Valentino**, reported the publisher.

#1205 DECEMBER 20 1996

Fantagraphics heralded the return of comics legend **Steve Ditko** to comics with his upcoming book ***Steve Ditko's Strange Avenging Tales***. The first issue of the all-ages book was slated for a February 1997 shipment.

#1206 DECEMBER 27 1996

James Owen announced that his publishing company, **Coppervale**, was back in business. Owen had suspended operations earlier in the year citing health problems. The first book from the revamped company was ***Starchild: Crossroads #4***.

— By Ray Sidman
from the Comics Buyer's Guide archives

Fights fake Doomsday | 1st new Wonder Girl | Cave Carson appears | 1st Invisible Plane | Diana in intensive care

	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120	121	122	123	124	125
	JUL 96	AUG 96	SEP 96	OCT 96	NOV 96	DEC 96	JAN 97	FEB 97	MAR 97	APR 97	MAY 97	JUN 97	JUL 97	AUG 97	SEP 97
NM Price	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$3	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2

PRICE GUIDE KEY:
OTHER CGC GRADES

Slabbed CGC 9.8 (NM/M) is **3 times** the CGC 9.4 price above
CGC 9.0 (VF/NM) is **2/5 (40%)** of CGC 9.4
CGC 9.6 (NM+) is **1.5 times** CGC 9.4
CGC 8.0 (VF) is **1/5 (20%)** of CGC 9.4

Slave Parasite #1

Black, white, and red art makes up *Slave Parasite* and it did not have a price on it. When I balked at the $5 price, the guy at the table sold it to me for $3. I assume the indecisive lad was Garrett Adderley, the writer and artist. I think the story is about a vampire or a demon that is very depressed and angry. Surprise! It's kinda goth and it had poetry in it. It was broken up into chapters including "Feed the Weak ... Weap the Weap."

TRAGIC STUDIOS
WRITER:
GARRETT ADDERLEY
ARTIST:
ADDERLEY
COLOR • 24 PGS.
$5

I don't know what a "weap" is. My guess is, if Adderley had an editor to rein him in and make him adhere to a more traditional narrative, the book would be a lot better. Right now the whole thing smacks of whininess.

Our main character is a vampire and vampire monster hunter. He broods, he walks, he kills, and, I guess, writes poetry in his spare time. I guess you can say, he "weaps" for the future!

Adderley isn't quite ready. Wait for the next issue, I say.

★½ — Tony DiGerolamo

www.tragicstudios.com

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Spawn
IMAGE, 1992
1 5
1/A 3
2 4
3-6 3
7-9 4
10-50 3
51-97 2
98-99 3
100/A 6
100/B-100/F ..5
101-149 3
150 5
151-160 3
Ann 1 5
Fan ed. 1-3 1

Special Marvel Edition
MARVEL, 1971
1 20
2-4 15
5-14 7
15 45
➥1st Shang-Chi
16 18

Spectacular Spider-Man
MARVEL, 1968
1 90
2 75

Spectacular Spider-Man
MARVEL, 1976
-1 2
1 25
2 15
3 8
4-7 5
7/35¢ 15
8 5
8/35¢ 15
9 5
9/35¢ 15
10 4
10/35¢ 15
11 4
11/35¢ 15
12-20 4
21-26 3
➥1st Miller Daredevil
27-28 15
➥2nd Miller Daredevil
29-55 3
56 5
57-63 3
64 5
➥1st Cloak & Dagger
65-82 3
83 7
➥Punisher app.
84 3
85 5
86-99 3
100 5
101 3
102-115 2
116 3
117-129 2
130 3
131 5
132 4
133 3
134-142 2
143 4
144-146 2
147 8
➥New Hobgoblin
148 2
149 3
150-157 2
158 5
159 4
160-188 2
189 4
190-195 2
195/Collector's ..3
196-199 2
200 4
201-213 2
213/Collector's ..3
214-217 2
217/Variant 3
218-219 2
220-221 3
222 2
223-223/Variant .3
224 2
225 5
225/Variant 4
226-228 2
229 3
229/Variant-230 .4
231-249 2
250 3
251-255 2
255/Variant 5
256-263 2
Ann 1 5
Ann 2 4
Ann 3-7 3
Ann 8 4
Ann 9-'97 3
Special 1 4

Spectacular Spider-Man
MARVEL, 2003
1 4
1/CanExpo 6
2-3 3
4 4
5-7 3
8-13 2
14 3
15 7
➥Avngrs Disassmbled
16 5
➥Avngrs Disassmbled
17-19 2
20 3
➥Organic webshooters
21-27 2

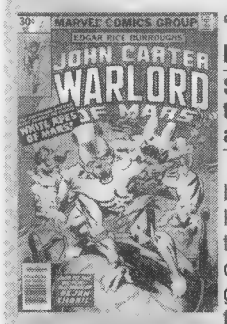
Spectre
DC, 1967
1 150
2 60
3-5 50
6-10 40

Spectre
DC, 1987
1-5 3
6-31 2
Ann 1 3

Spectre
DC, 1992
0 3
1 6
2 5
3 4
4-7 3
8 4
9-20 3
21-36 2
37-62 3
Ann 1 4

RETROVIEW
John Carter #2

★★★½



Marvel
Jul 1977 • 17 pp.
Writer: Marv Wolfman
Pencils: Gil Kane
Inks: Rudy Nebres
Cover: Kane, Cockrum

"Air Pirates of Mars, Part 2: From the Shadows ... Stara Kan"

Stara Kan escapes Helium and flees to the Atmosphere Factory. John Carter, after fighting White Apes, is captured.

Rudy Nebres' inks propel this book into the stratosphere. Add Gil Kane's pencils, and you have a masterpiece of storytelling and art. Not only do we meet Stara Kan, but we glimpse the White Apes of Barsoom for the first time, as well. Stara Kan reveals why he wants control of the Factory, and a Boy Scout he ain't!

The story reads like an Edgar Rice Burroughs novel, and Marv Wolfman deserves praise for crafting a story well suited to the Carter mythology.

© Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc.

Last GCC copy 9.9 **Then 30c NOW $4**

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Spectre
DC, 2001
1-27 3

Spider-Girl
MARVEL, 1998
0 2
1/2 3
1-1/A 4
2-5 3
6-24 2
25 3
26-58 2
59-74 3
75 8
76-99 3
100 4
Ann '99 4

Spider-Man
MARVEL, 1990
-1 2
1/2 4
1/2/Platinum 6
1-1/Collector's ..5
1/Platinum 42
1/Silver 5
2-8 3
9 6
10 4
11-12 3
13 5
14 3
15-25 2
26 4
27-46 2
46/Collector's ...3
47-49 2
50 3
50/Variant 4
51-51/Variant ...3
52-56 2
57-57/Variant ...3
58-74 2
75 4
76-98/B 2
Ann '97-'98 ...3
GS 1 4
Holiday 1995 ..3

Spider-Woman
MARVEL, 1978
1 6
2-3 3
4-36 2
➥1st Siryn
37-38 4
➥X-Men app
39-49 1
50 4

Spidey Super Stories
MARVEL, 1974
1 20
➥Spider-Man origin
2 6
3-57 5

Spirit
QUALITY, 1944
1 600
2 350
3 250
4-5 185
6-10 150
11 125
12-17 200
18-21 250
22 350

Spirit
FICTION HOUSE, 1952
1 250
2 225
3-4 175
5 200

Spoof
MARVEL, 1970
1 15
2 7
3 8
4-5 7

Spy Smasher
FAWCETT, 1941
1 2500
2 750
3-7 450
8-9 350
10 375
11 350

Star Spangled Comics
DC, 1941
1 4500
2 1800
3 1000
4-5 875
6 800
7 8000
➥1st Newsboy Legion
8-10 1600
11-16 1175
17 1500
18-19 1000
20-30 850
31-40 525
41-50 425
51-60 400
61-64 375
65 1050
➥Robin stories start
66-68 690
69 800
➥1st Tomahawk
70 690
71-80 575
81-83 450
84 625
85-86 450
87 625
88-94 500
95-99 265
100 300
101-110 225
111-112 200
113 375
114 325
115-131 200

Star Spangled War Stories
DC, 1952
132 (1) 750
133 (2) 550
3 475
4-6 285
7-10 220
11-20 185
21-30 130
31-40 90
41-50 70
51-70 60
71-83 55
84 125
➥1st Mlle Marie
85-87 80
88-89 65
90 325
➥1st Dinosaur Island
91 45
92 110
93 45
94-99 110
100 145
101-133 60
134 65
135-138 60
139 50
140-143 24
144 27
145 35
146-150 20
151 125
➥1st Unknown Soldier
152-153 20
154 55
➥Unk. Soldier origin
155 16
156-161 14
162-180 6
181-204 5

Star Trek
GOLD KEY, 1967
1 350
2 125
3 100
4 90
5-6 75
7 60
8-9 50
10 40
11-20 30
20/Whitman ...45
21-23 30
23/Whitman 45
24-26 25
24-26/Whitman .35
27 20
27/Whitman 30
28-29 20
29/Whitman 30
30-36 20
31-36/Whitman .30
37-40 20
38-41/Whitman .30
41 25
42-48 15
44-48/Whitman .25
49-59 15
51-59/Whitman .25
60 12
60/Whitman 20
61 12

Star Trek
MARVEL, 1980
1 5
2 3
3-18 2

△ #127

WONDER WOMAN

A real goddess

After years of interacting with her pantheon of gods, Diana is taken to Olympus where she's awarded the title of "Goddess of Truth." Her heroic duties on Earth are taken over by her mother, who eventually travels back in time to World War II.

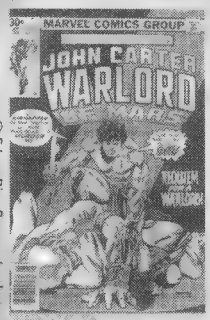
image © 1997 DC

"Genesis" tie-in — "Faces of the DCU" — Demon appears — Hippolyta in World War II; Justice Society of America appears — Dark Angel appears — Origin of Donna Troy

	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135
	OCT 97	NOV 97	DEC 97	JAN 98	FEB 98	MAR 98	APR 98	MAY 98	JUN 98	JUL 98
NM Price	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2

THE BOTTOM LINE

John Carter #3 ★★★½



© Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc.

Marvel
Aug 1977 • 17 pp.
Writer: Mary Wolfman
Pencils: Gil Kane
Inks: Rudy Nebres
Cover: Kane

"Air Pirates of Mars, Part 3: Requiem for a Warlord!"

An imprisoned John Carter escapes a death cell, only to submit to Stara Kan due to the strength of his love for Dejah Thoris.

Whenever Rudy Nebres touches a page, it's magic, and this splash page is no exception. A chained Carter, seething with rage, sets the tone for this tale of revenge, hate, and submission. As Carter fights for the life of his love, Dejah Thoris, he faces men and beasts with an indomitable will that deadly pain cannot stop. After this issue, readers will never doubt the depth of his love or his dedication to Barsoom and its people.

Best CBC copy: 9.8 — Then 30c NOW $4

Star Wars
MARVEL, 1977

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.20
1/35¢	.800
1/2nd	.4
2	.10
2/35¢	.150
3	.8
3/35¢	.150
4	.7
4/35¢	.150
5-19	.7
20-21	.6
22-23	.5
24-48	.4
49	.5
50-106	.4
107	.25
➥Low distribution	
Ann 1	.8
Ann 2-3	.5

Strange Adventures
DC, 1950

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.2500
2	.1150
3	.850
4	.800
5-6	.650
7	.625
8	.550
9	.1250
➥1st Captain Comet	
10	.400
11	.500
12	.400
13	.500
14	.650
15	.500
16	.450
17	.275
18-20	.450
21-23	.350
24	.375
25	.350
26-29	.300
30	.425
31-38	.275
39	.400
40-41	.250
42	.275
43	.250
44	.325
45-46	.250
47	.200
48	.250
49	.200
50	.225
51	.200
52-53	.225
54	.150
55	.200
56-60	.150
61-70	.125
71-74	.100
75	.75
76-78	.100
79	.150
80-83	.100
84	.125
85-90	.100
91	.90
92-93	.80
94	.75
95	.90
96	.65
97	.90
98	.75
99	.90
100	.125
101	.65
102-103	.90
104-106	.65
107	.75
108-109	.65
110	.75
111	.65
112	.60
113	.90
114	.125
➥1st Star Hawkins	
115-116	.60
117	.550
➥1st Atomic Knights	
118	.75
119	.90
120	.200
➥2nd Atomic Knights	
121-123	.75
124	.90
125-126	.75
127	.50
128	.75
129	.90
130-131	.50
132	.75
133-135	.65
136-137	.50
138	.55
139-140	.50
141	.55
142-145	.50
146	.40
147-148	.50
149	.40
150-160	.50
161-167	.35
168	.30
169	.35
170	.50
171-172	.30
173	.40
174	.30
175	.40
176-177	.30
178	.25
179	.30
180	.150
➥1st Animal Man	
181	.25
182-183	.30
184	.60
➥Animal Man app.	
185-186	.25
187	.20
188	.25
189	.30
190	.100
➥Animal Man app.	
191	.20
192-193	.25
194	.20
195	.35
➥Animal Man app.	
196-197	.25
198	.20
199	.30
200	.25
201	.40
202-204	.20
205	.125
➥Deadman begins	
206	.60
207	.50
208-212	.60
213	.40
214	.60
215	.45
216	.40
217-219	.20
220	.25
221-223	.20
224-230	.15
231-244	.10

Strange Tales
MARVEL, 1951

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.2750
2	.800
3-5	.700
6-10	.550
11-20	.350
21-30	.275
31-44	.225
45-58	.200
59	.225
60	.200
61	.225
62-63	.175
64	.200
65-66	.175
67-78	.200
79	.250
80	.200
81-83	.175
84	.200
85-88	.175
89	.400
➥Kirby Fin Fang Foom	
90-92	.175
93-96	.150
97	.350
➥Aunt May & Uncle Ben	
98-100	.150
101	.900
➥Human Torch starts	
102	.425
➥Human Torch app.	
103-105	.300
106	.225
107	.250
108-109	.225
110	.1250
➥1st Dr. Strange	
111	.350
112-113	.150
114	.350
115	.450
➥Dr. Strange origin	
116	.125
117-118	.100
119-123	.125
124-125	.75
126	.90
127-129	.75
130	.90
131-134	.75
135	.125
➥1st S.H.I.E.L.D.	
136	.75
137-147	.50
148	.75
➥Ancient One origin	
149-150	.50
151	.75
152-158	.50
159	.60
160-168	.50
169	.15
➥Series restarted	
170	.10
171-177	.7
178	.15
➥Warlock origin	
179-181	.10
182-185	.3
185/30¢	.20
186	.3
186/30¢	.20
187-188	.3
Ann 1	.325
Ann 2	.350

Stuntman Comics
HARVEY, 1946

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.685
2-3	.425

Sub-Mariner
TIMELY 1941

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.25000
2	.7000
3	.5000
4	.4500
5	.3500
6-11	.2500
12-15	.1500
16-20	.1200
21-31	.1000
32	.1250
33-35	.900
36-41	.700
42	.1000

Sub-Mariner
MARVEL, 1968

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.125
2	.45
3-4	.35
5	.30
6-7	.25
8	.75
➥vs. The Thing	
9	.30
10	.25
11-13	.20
14	.50
➥Toro dies	
15-30	.20
31-33	.15
34	.70
➥Hulk, Surfer app.	
35	.35
➥Hulk, Surfer app.	
36-40	.15
41-72	.10
Special 1-2	.15

Sugar & Spike
DC, 1956

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.1700
2	.700
3-5	.500
6-10	.350
11-20	.250
21-30	.150
31-40	.125
41-50	.75
51-60	.55
61-80	.50
81-98	.35

Suicide Squad
DC, 1987

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1-22	.1
23	.15
➥1st Oracle	
24-49	.1
50	.2
51-66	.1
Ann 1	.2

Sun Girl
MARVEL, 1948

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.1000
2-3	.675

Superboy
DC, 1949

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.7000
2	.2000
3	.1500
4-5	.1000
6-10	.800
11-15	.600
16-20	.450
21-30	.350
31-38	.275
39-50	.225
51-60	.175
61-67	.125
68	.500
➥1st Bizarro	
69-77	.100
78	.175
➥Mxyzptlk origin	
79	.100
80	.150
➥Meets Supergirl	
81-85	.90
86	.200
➥Legion app.	
87-88	.90
89	.275
➥1st Mon-El	
90-93	.90
94-97	.75
98	.100
99	.75
100	.175
➥Phtm. Zone villains	
101-120	.60
121-128	.50
129	.75
130-137	.40
138	.55
➥Giant-sized	
139-140	.40
141-146	.35
147	.50
➥Saturn Girl origin	
148-155	.25
156	.65
➥Giant-size	
157-164	.25
165	.50
➥Giant-size	
166-168	.25
169-173	.20
174	.30
175-178	.20
➥Giant-sized	
179-181	.15
182	.20
183-196	.12
197	.20
➥Legion stories start	
198-199	.12
200	.15
201	.12
202	.30
203-204	.12
205	.40
206-207	.12
208	.15
209	.10
210	.15
211-212	.10
213-221	.7
222-230	.5
Ann 1	.175
SP 1	.4

Super Goof
GOLD KEY, 1965

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.24
2-3	.12
4-10	.10
11-20	.7
21-30	.5
31-57	.3
58-59	.4
60	.15
61	.70
62	.15
63	.3
64-66	.5
67-69	.8
70-74	.15

Superman
DC, 1939

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.160000
2	.16000
3	.9200
4	.6500
5	.6000
6-7	.3500
8-10	.2850
11-13	.2200
14	.4500
➥U.S. flag cover	
15	.2050
16-20	.1650
21	.1500
22-23	.1100
24	.1400
25	.1050
26	.1250
27-29	.950
30	.1350
➥1st Mr. Mxyzptlk	
31-40	.825
41-50	.650
51-52	.525
53	.1800
➥Superman origin	
54-60	.500
61	.1000
➥1st Kryptonite	
62-70	.475
71-75	.450

Flashback 1991

15 years ago in CBG...

#942 DECEMBER 6 1991

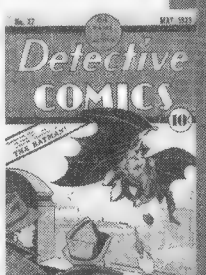
Elfquest comics reached a milestone, as the graphic-novel series passed the one-million-copies-sold mark. Creator **Richard Pini** said he hadn't been aware the milestone was even approaching, calling it "an incredibly nice sucker punch."

#943 DECEMBER 13 1991

A sequence in the daily newspaper strip ***Hi & Lois***, created by **Mort Walker** (who also created ***Beetle Bailey***), featured an **X-Men** theme. ***CBG*** ran the strip.

#944 DECEMBER 20 1991

Signalling the beginning of the end for an American television tradition, **NBC** announced it was canceling Saturday morning cartoons, effective immediately. The network cited severely dwindling profits over the prior two years.



#945 DECEMBER 27 1991

A copy of ***Detective Comics*** #27 — with the well-known first appearance of **Batman** — sold at auction for $75,000. It was sold by Diamond Comic Distributors President and Founder **Steve Geppi** to **Marvin Foreman**, a New York-based sports-card dealer.

— By Ray Sidman
from the Comics Buyer's Guide archives

Donna Troy returns · Goes to $1.99 · Diana human again · #1,000,000 · Superman, Batman appear · 1st Devastation

136	137	138	1M	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150
AUG 98	SEP 98	OCT 98	NOV 98	DEC 98	JAN 99	FEB 99	MAR 99	APR 99	MAY 99	JUN 99	JUL 99	AUG 99	SEP 99	OCT 99	NOV 99
$2	$2	$2	$3	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2

PRICE GUIDE KEY:
OTHER CGC GRADES

Slabbed CGC 9.8 (NM/M) is **3 times** the CGC 9.4 price above
CGC 9.0 (VF/NM) is **2/5 (40%)** of CGC 9.4
CGC 9.6 (NM+) is **1.5 times** CGC 9.4
CGC 8.0 (VF) is **1/5 (20%)** of CGC 9.4

Spider-Girl: Too Many Spiders

This series takes places in the not-so-distant future, where May Parker (named after Aunt May) follows in her dad Spider-man's footsteps as Spider-Girl. After she loses her powers she continues to carry on as a super-hero, much to Peter and Mary Jane's chagrin.

MARVEL
WRITER:
TOM DEFALCO
ARTISTS:
PAT OLIFFE, RON FRENZ
COLOR • 144 PGS.
$7.99

Borrowing the Green Goblin's glider from Norman Osborn (the grandson of the original), she runs afoul of Nova, an older Tony Stark, and the next generation of Avengers. In the end, she regains her powers to battle "Spider-Man." (It's not Peter.)

Many of Tom DeFalco's creations (Steel Spider, Lyja, Thunderstrike) populate this alternate timeline. Since this is a potential future of the Marvel universe, such "Clone Saga" characters as Kaine appear and May's costume is based on the clone's. This future series has a 1980s feel to it, reminiscent of Tom DeFalco and Ron Frenz' run on *Amazing Spider-Man*. It's one of the few positive futures in the Marvel universe.

★★ **— Kurt Anthony Krug**

www.marvel.com
ISBN: 0-78512-156-0

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Superman
CONTINUED
76 1100
➥Batman team-up
77-80 400
81-90 375
91-95 360
96-99 325
100 1500
101-110 280
111-120 240
121-130 195
131-139 155
140 175
➥1st Bizarro Jr.
141-145 115
146 160
➥Superman origin
147 135
148 115
149 125
➥Legion app.
150-161 68
162-180 58
181-186 55
187 60
188-192 55
193 60
194-198 55
199 180
➥1st race with Flash
200 60
201 24
202 30
203-211 24
212 50
➥Superbabies
213-216 24
217 30
218-221 20
222 30
223-226 20
227 30
228-231 20
232 30
233 40
➥Kryptonite destroyed
234-238 18
239 30
➥Giant-sized
240-244 18
245 22
246-251 18
252 60
➥100-page issue
253 18
254 22
255-264 9
265-271 8
272 20
➥100-page issue
273-277 7
278 17
➥100-page issue
279-283 5
284 7
285-286 5
287-292 4
293-299 3
300 11
301-350 3
351-399 2
400 5
401-422 2
423 5
Ann 1 600

UNSLABBED Near Mint

Ann 2 325
Ann 3 210
Ann 4 180
Ann 5 105
Ann 6 90
Ann 7 62
Ann 8 46
Ann 9-10 5
Ann 11 4
Ann 12 3
Special 1-3 4

Superman
DC, 1987
0 3
1-2 4
3-5 3
6-8 2
9 4
10-49 2
50 4
51-52 2
53 3
54-72 2
73 3
74 4
75 5
➥Death of Superman
75/Collector's ...12
75/Platinum ...40
76-77 3
78 2
78/Collector's 3
79-82 2
82/Variant 4
83-99 2
100 3
100/Variant 4
101-122 2
123 3
123/Variant 5
124-150 2
150/Variant 4
151-170 2
171 4
172-174 2
175 4
176-190 2
190/A 4
191 2
192 3
193-199 2
200 4
201 8
202 2
203 6
➥Lee sketchbook
204 4
204/Sketch ...250
204/DF Lee ...30
204/DF Azzarell 25
205/Lee 4
205/Turner 3
205/DF Lee ...30
205/DF Turner .25
206-207 3
208 5
209 4
210-215 3
216 5
➥Inf. Crisis tie
217 7
➥OMAC app.
218 5
219 6
➥Sacrifice Pt. 1
219/Variant-226 .3
➥1st series #s return
650 8
651-656 3
1000000 4
1000000/Ltd. .15
Ann 1 4
Ann 2-6 3
Ann 7 4
Ann 8-11 3
Ann 12 4

WONDER WOMAN

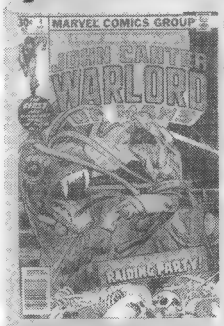
The new Wonder Girl

With Donna Troy long since relinquishing the title of Wonder Girl, Cassie Sandsmark took up the mantle and helped her idol, Wonder Woman, on a number of adventures, before becoming a heroine on her own, a role she continues today.

△ #153

image © 2000 DC

RETROVIEW
John Carter #4 ★★½



"Air Pirates of Mars, Part 4: Raiding Party"

Stara Kan forces John Carter to take part in raids to undermine his reputation. Seeds of discontent are spread by The Council of Five.

"Raiding Party" is a passable chapter in the "Air Pirates of Mars." The cover art, inked by Pablo Marcos, is solid but lacks the power and savagery of Gil Kane and Rudy Nebres.

Carter's inner struggle dominates the issue. Join the raids or Dejah Thoris dies. Steal this jewel or ... In the end, Carter puts aside his own life and saves the people of Zeeere.

The final battle between Carter and Stara Kan is coming!

Marvel
Sep 1977 • 17 pp.
Writer: Marv Wolfman
Pencils: Gil Kane
Inks: Rudy Nebres
Cover: Kane, Pablo Marcos

Best CBG copy: **9.6**

Then 30¢ NOW $3

© Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc.

UNSLABBED Near Mint

GS 1-2 5
GS 3 6
Special 1 4
3D 1 5

Superman/ Batman
DC, 2003
1 8
1/RRP 125
1/2nd-1/3rd ...4
2 6
3 5
3/2nd 3
4 4
5 3
6 4
7 3
8 10
➥1st new Supergirl
8/4th 3
9 5
9/2nd 4
9/3rd 3
10 5
10/2nd 4
11 5
12 4
13 5
13/Supergirl ...7
14-18 5
19 4
20 3
21 4
22-24 3
26 4
27-29 3

Superman Family
DC, 1974
164 35
➥100-page issue
165-169 13
➥100-page issue
170-177 11
178-180 5
181-200 4
201-222 3

Superman's Girl Friend Lois Lane
DC, 1958
1 2600
2 625
3 415

UNSLABBED Near Mint

4-5 300
6-10 220
11-18 125
19 215
20 125
21-29 86
30-50 48
51-67 34
68 44
69 34
70 175
➥1st SA Catwoman
71 105
➥Catwoman app.
72-73 15
74 34
75-76 15
77 24
78 15
79-85 10
86 16
87-94 10
95 25
➥Giant-sized
96-103 8
104 16
105-106 14
107-110 6
111 10
112 6
113 14
114-120 6
121 5
122-123 8
124-137 5
Ann 1 75
Ann 2 50

Superman's Pal Jimmy Olsen
DC, 1954
1 4000
2 1250
3 675
4-5 475
6-10 335
11-20 235
21-30 150
31-40 100
41-50 75
51-56 50
57-70 30
71 25
72-73 30
74-75 25

UNSLABBED Near Mint

76 30
77-88 25
89-90 20
91-94 16
95 25
96-99 16
100 25
101-103 12
104 35
➥Weird Adventures
105-112 12
113 25
➥Anti-Superman ish
114-119 12
120-126 10
127 16
128-130 10
131-132 8
133 10
134 25
135-140 12
141-150 10
151 8
152-163 7

Supernatural Thrillers
MARVEL, 1972
1 27
2-4 10
5 27
➥1st Living Mummy
6-15 10

Super-Team Family
DC, 1975
1 12
2-4 6
5-10 4
11-15 3

Super-Villain Team-Up
MARVEL, 1975
1 7
2 5
3-5 4
5/30¢ 20
6 3
6/30¢ 20
7 3
7/30¢ 20
8-12 3
12/35¢ 15
13 3
13/35¢ 15

UNSLABBED Near Mint

14 3
14/35¢ 15
15-17 3

Swamp Thing
DC, 1972
1 60
2 30
3-4 20
5-6 15
7 12
8-10 10
11-24 5

Swamp Thing
DC, 1986
46 4
47-49 3
50 4
51 3
52 4
53 5
➥Batman app
54-81 3
82-83 2
84 5
➥Sandman app
85-89 2
90 3
91-99 2
100 3
101-124 2
125 3
126-140 2
140/Platinum ...6
141-149 2
150 3
151-158 2
159-171 3
Ann 4-5 4
Ann 6 3
Ann 7 4

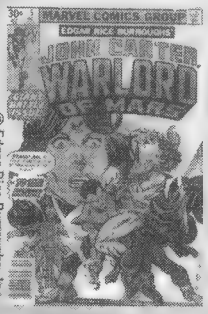
Tales From the Crypt
E.C., 1950
20 775
21 900
22 700
23-25 520
26-30 400
31 460
32 300
33 675
➥Crypt Keeper origin
34-46 295

Young Justice appears — Fights Devastation — Goes to $2.25

	151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160
	DEC 99	JAN 00	FEB 00	MAR 00	APR 00	MAY 00	JUN 00	JUL 00	AUG 00	SEP 00
NM Price	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2

THE BOTTOM LINE

John Carter #5 ★★★½



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"Air Pirates of Mars, Part 5: And One Shall Die"

John Carter escapes from Stara Kan's ship and battles him to the death. Stara Kan taunts Carter, as he dies.

You can feel the tension building: Kan tormenting Carter, forcing him into battle against his will. Kan taunting Carter with "I know where ..." It's here now, Carter fans.

Gil Kane was one of the best at first-to-last-panel battles, and this struggle is classic Kane. The bottom panel on page 26 represents Gil Kane at his best, with a towering Kan and impassioned Carter coiling for action.

It doesn't get much better than this!

Marvel
Oct 1977 • 17 pp.
Writer: Marv Wolfman
Pencils: Gil Kane
Inks: Rudy Nebres
Cover: Kane/Pablo Marcos

Best CGC copy 9.8 — Then 30¢ NOW $3

Superman-Two $

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
Tales of Suspense	
MARVEL, 1959	
1	1400
2	540
3	475
4	450
5-10	325
11-20	240
21-32	150
33-38	135
39	3500
➥1st Iron Man	
40	1100
41	650
42-45	325
➥1st Crimson Dynamo	
46-47	210
48	265
➥1st red/Gold armor	
49	210
50	155
51	105
52	140
53	120
➥Watcher origin	
54-56	62
57	170
➥Cap America app.	
58-59	210
➥Cap stories start	
60	120
61-62	82
63	180
➥Bucky origin	
64	72
65-66	125
➥Red Skull origin	
67-70	52
71-80	42
81-99	32
Tales of the Zombie	
MARVEL, 1973	
1	25
2	18
3-5	15
6-10	10
Ann 1	15
Tales to Astonish	
MARVEL, 1959	
1	2000
2	635
3-5	440
6-10	355
11-20	265
21-26	200
27	3600
➥1st Hank Pym	
28-34	175
35	1900
➥1st Ant-Man	
36	625
37-40	350
41-43	230
44	500
➥1st Wasp	
45-48	150
49	250
➥1st Giant Man	
50-56	95
57	125
➥Spider-Man app.	
58	95
59	150
➥Giant-Man vs. Hulk	
60	175
➥Hulk stories start	
61	75
62	90
➥1st Leader	
63-65	75
66-69	70
70	100
➥Namor stories start	
71-81	55
82	78
83-90	55
91	52
92-93	75
94-99	50
100	75
101	85
Tarzan	
DELL, 1948	
1	900
2	525
3-5	385
6-9	290
10	260
11	235
12-15	220
16-20	160
21-30	135
31-54	80
55-70	50
71-79	42
80-99	30
100	40
101-110	28
111-120	25
121-131	20
Tarzan	
GOLD KEY, 1962	
132-154	14
155	18
156-162	10
163-164	8
165	10
166-167	8
168	10
169-170	8
171	10
172-200	7
201-206	6
Tarzan	
DC, 1972	
207	17
208	10
209-210	6
211-229	4
230-235	8
236-258	3
Tarzan	
MARVEL, 1977	
1	3
1/35¢	15
2	2
2/35¢	15
3	2
3/35¢	15
4	2
4/35¢	15
5	2
5/35¢	15
6-29	2
Ann 1-3	2
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	
MIRAGE, 1984	
1	300
1/Counterfeit	2
2	28
2/Counterfeit	2
3-3/Misprint	15
4	12
5	4
6	3
7	5
8	4
9-10	3
11	4
12-15	3
16-62	2
Teen Titans	
DC, 1966	
1	260
2	100
3-5	40
6-10	32
11-17	28
18-22	33
23-25	18
26-30	12
31	20
➥Giant-sized	
32-38	18
39-43	12
44-47	7
48	12
➥1st Harlequin	
49	7
50	20
➥Batgirl returns	
51-53	6
Thing	
CHARLTON, 1952	
1	735
2-4	585
5-9	540
10-14	390
15-17	295
Thing	
MARVEL, 1983	
1	6
2-10	2
11-13	1
14	2
15-36	1
Thor	
MARVEL, 1966	
126	125
127-140	45
141-160	32
161-164	25
165	40
➥Warlock app.	
166	36
167	24
➥Galactus origin	
168-169	36
➥Galactus origin	
170-177	20
178-179	18
180	24
➥Thor vs. Mephisto	
181	23
182-192	12
193	55
➥Silver Surfer app.	
194-199	12
200	16
201-205	9
206-224	7
225	14
➥1st Firelord	
226	7
227-260	5
260/35¢	15
261	5
261/35¢	15
262	5
262/35¢	15
263	5
263/35¢	15
264	5
264/35¢	15
265-299	3
300	8
301-336	2
337	7
➥1st Beta Ray Bill	
338	3
339	5
340	4
341	3
342	4
343-348	2
349	3
350-373	2
374	3
375-400	2
401-410	1
411	3
412	2
413-431	1
432-433	2
434-449	1
450	3
451-473	1
474-475	2
475/Variant	3
476-481	2
482	3
483-499	2
500	3
501-502	2
Ann 2	65
Ann 3	12
Ann 4	10
Ann 5-6	8
Ann 7	7
Ann 8	6
Ann 9-12	4
Ann 13-19	3
Thrilling Comics	
BETTER, 1940	
1	2000
2	800
3	650
4-10	500
11-18	425
19	500
➥1st Amer. Crusader	
20	425
21-30	350
31-40	310
41	700
➥Hitler cover	
42-52	270
53-70	225
71-80	90
THUNDER Agents	
TOWER, 1965	
1	140
2	75
3-5	55
6-8	42
9-10	35
11-15	38
16-19	22
20	15
Tomahawk	
DC, 1950	
1	850
2	400
3-5	290
6-10	195
11-20	125
21-27	100
28	110
29	130
➥Frazetta art	
30	90
31-40	70
41-50	56
51-56	45
57	85
➥Frazetta art	
58-60	40
61-80	32
81-90	25
91-100	15
101-110	10
111-120	8
121-132	6
133-140	5
Tomb of Dracula	
MARVEL, 1972	
1	100
2-3	35
4	30
5-6	18
7	15
8-9	12
10	100
➥1st Blade	
11	10
12	12
13	35
➥Blade origin	
14	12
15-16	10
17	12
18	10
19	12
20-21	10
22-29	8
30	10
31-32	8
33-41	7
42-43	6
43/30¢	18
44	6
44/30¢	18
45	6
45/30¢	18
46	6
46/30¢	18
47	6
47/30¢	18
48-49	6
50	10
51-57	6
57/35¢	12
58	6
58/35¢	12
59	6
59/35¢	12
60	6
60/35¢	12
61-69	5
70	8
Top-Notch Comics	
M.L.J., 1939	
1	3500
2	1500
3	1000
4	825
5	900
6-8	650
9	3000
➥1st Black Hood	
10	1000
➥2nd Black Hood	
11-15	625
16-20	550
21-30	425
31-45	250
Transformers	
MARVEL, 1984	
1	10
2-3	5
4-20	3
21-69	2
70-76	5
77-79	10
80	18
Turok, Son of Stone	
DELL, 1956	
3	155
4-5	125
6-7	110
7/15¢	135
8-10	110
11-20	75
21-30	48
31-40	38
41-50	28
51-60	22
61-70	15
71-90	10
91-110	8
111-130	6
GS 1	100
Twilight Zone	
GOLD KEY, 1962	
1	90
2	55
3	42
4-10	35
11-20	30
21-27	16
28-30	10
31-40	8
41-51	6
52-70	5
71-92	4
Two-Fisted Tales	
E.C., 1950	
18	700
19	500
20	325
21-22	260
23-25	210
26-30	160
31-35	130
36-41	115
Ann 1	550
Ann 2	400

Flashback 1986

20 years ago in CBG...

#681 DECEMBER 5 1986

News of newfound comics celebrity and ***American Splendor*** creator **Harvey Pekar** was spreading, as a spokesman for **David Letterman** told ***CBG*** that the comic-book creator was booked for a return to the late-night television show, following the popularity of his October appearance there.

#682 DECEMBER 12 1986

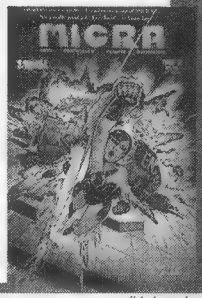
Eclipse Comics announced that it was creating a comic book based on the role-playing game ***Villains and Vigilantes***, published by **Fantasy Games**. Publisher **Dean Mullaney** cited "a large overlap between fans of comics and role-playing games."

#683 DECEMBER 19 1986

Writer **Steve Englehart** discussed plans for Marvel's ***West Coast Avengers***, including the addition of three new members in #17 to #23: **The Vision**, **Scarlet Witch**, and **Moon Knight**.

#684 DECEMBER 26 1986

Comics Interview Publications told ***CBG*** that it was offering a no-questions-asked money-back guarantee to ***CBG*** readers who bought ***MICRA*** #2.



— By Ray Sidman from the Comics Buyer's Guide archives

Fights Clayface — Batman appears — "Our Worlds at War" tie-ins — "Joker: Last Laugh" tie-in

	161	162	163	164	165	166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175
	OCT 00	NOV 00	DEC 00	JAN 01	FEB 01	MAR 01	APR 01	MAY 01	JUN 01	JUL 01	AUG 01	SEP 01	OCT 01	NOV 01	DEC 01
NM Price	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2

PRICE GUIDE KEY:
OTHER CGC GRADES

Slabbed CGC 9.8 (NM/M) is **3 times** the CGC 9.4 price above
CGC 9.0 (VF/NM) is **2/5 (40%)** of CGC 9.4

CGC 9.6 (NM+) is **1.5 times** CGC 9.4
CGC 8.0 (VF) is **1/5 (20%)** of CGC 9.4

Totally Spies #1-2

The verdict is in. I asked the experts in my family what they thought of *Totally Spies* #1 and #2 from Papercutz. They loved them.

Having watched the television show with them and read *The OP (Ocean Palisades)* and *I Hate the '80s*, I concur. The team at NBM/Papercutz have captured the art and appeal of the tweenage hit. Each book contains two complete stories in glorious color and style.

NBM/PAPERCUTZ
WRITERS AND ARTISTS:
UNCREDITED
Color • 96 Pgs.© $7.95©

Alex, Sam, and Clover go retro in "I Hate the '80s," relive a nightmare in "Attack of the 50-Foot Mandy," live in a picture-perfect community that is too perfect in "The OP," and time travel on a budget in "Futureshock."

If you have ever watched this trio in action in their animated show, you know what to expect from the stories: a little bit of attitude with characters who are full of pizzazz, stunningly beautiful, and dangerous to boot.

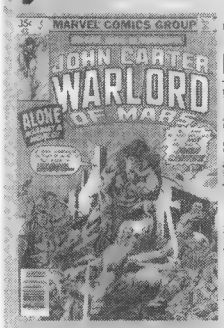
In short, they're *Totally Spies*, and this is a book ready to fly off the shelves.

★★★½ — **Tim Lasiuta**

www.papercutz.com
ISBN: 1-59707-043-2
and 1-59707-045-9

RETROVIEW

John Carter #6 ★★



Marvel
Nov 1977 • 17 pp.
Writer: Marv Wolfman
Pencils: Gil Kane
Inks: Rudy Messina
Cover: Kane

"Air Pirates of Mars, Part 6: Hell in Helium"

With the planet of Barsoom poisoned against John Carter, he battles to save the Incubation Chambers, only to be attacked by an angry mob.

After last issue's life-and-death struggle with Stara Kan, Carter again faces hatred, this time from his own people! The Council of Five has done well, and it's death for Carter. The story is strong, with Carter's noble spirit again defending the innocent.

The only problem in this issue is the inking. Rudy Messina? It could even be M. Hands or the pseudonymous Crusty Bunkers. Inconsistent inking defeats any mood.

© Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc.

Best CGC copy: **9.6** — **Then 35¢ NOW $3**

Ultimates
MARVEL, 2002

UNSLABBED Near Mint	
1	.7
2	.9
3	.6
4	.10
5	.8
6	.7
7	.6
8	.5
9	.6
10	.4
11	.3
12	.2
13	.4

Ultimates 2
MARVEL, 2005

1	.5
1/2nd	.3
1/Sketch	.35
2-11	.3
12	.4
Ann 1-2	.4

Ultimate Spider-Man
MARVEL, 2000

1/2	.8
1/2/A	.18
1	.65
1/White	.375
1/DF	.175
1/Kay-Bee	.4
1/FCBD	.3
1/Checkers	.7
1/Payless	.6
1/Target	.175
3	.16
4	.8
5	.55
6	.9
6/Niagara	.35
7	.9
8	.8
8/Payless-10	.6
11	.5
12	.4
13	.5
14	.4
15	.5
16-21	.3
22	.4
23-26	.3
27	.4
28	.3
29	.4
30	.3
31	.4
32	.3
33	.4
34-46	.3
47	.4
48-49	.3
50	.4
53	.3
60	.8
61	.5
62	.8
63	.5
➥Gwen Stacy returns	
64	.4
65	.5
66	.2
67	.3
68-71	.2
72	.4
73-77	.2
78-99	.3
100	.5
Ann 1-2	.3
SP 1	.4

Ultimate X-Men
MARVEL, 2000

1/2	.5
1	.14
1/Sketch	.20
1/DF	.40
1/Checkers	.30
1/NYPost	.8
1/Universal	.60
2	.7
3	.6
4-5	.5
6-10	.4
11-12	.3
13	.4
14	.3
15	.4
16-17	.3
18	.5
19	.4
20-26	.3
27-32	.2
33	.5
34	.4
40	.2
41	.5
42	.4
43-49	.2
50	.5
50/Conv	.15
51-59	.2
60-61	.3
61/Coipel	.5
62-74	.3
Ann 1-2	.4

Uncanny X-Men
MARVEL, 1970

-1	.2
142	.25
➥Future Past	
143	.8
144	.6
145	.7
146-148	.6
149-157	.5
158	.6
➥Rogue app.	
159-161	.5
162	.6
163-166	.5
167	.4
➥Rogue joins team	
168-175	.5
176-177	.4
178	.5
179	.4
180	.3
181	.4
182-183	.5
184-186	.4
187-188	.3
189-190	.4
191	.5
192	.4
193	.5
194-199	.3
200	.6
201	.5
➥Portacio art	
202-209	.4
210-211	.5
➥Wolv. vs. Sabretooth	
212-213	.8
➥Wolv. vs. Sabretooth	
214-215	.3
216	.4
217-218	.3
219-220	.4
221	.7
➥1st Mr. Sinister	
222	.5
➥Wolv. vs. Sabretooth	
223	.4
224-231	.3
232	.4
233-243	.3
244	.5
➥1st Jubilee	
245-247	.3
248	.5
➥1st Jim Lee X-Men	
249-258	.3
259	.4
260-265	.3
266	.14
➥1st Gambit	
267-268	.6
269	.3
270	.4
271-280	.3
281	.2
282	.3
283	.5
284	.4
285	.3
286	.2
287	.3
288-291	.2
292	.3
293	.2
294/Collector's	.3
295/Collector's	.2
296/Collector's	.3
297-299	.2
300	.3
301-302	.2
303	.3
304-306	.2
307	.5
308-328	.2
329	.4
330-352	.2
353	.3
354-362	.2
363	.4
364	.3
365-378	.2
379	.3
380-381	.2
381/DF	.7
382-386	.2
387	.3
388-403	.2
404	.4
405-415	.2
416	.3
417-429	.2
430-438	.3
439	.2
440-441	.3
442	.2
443	.3
444	.4
445-449	.2
450	.7
➥1st X-23	
451	.6
➥X-23 app.	
452	.3
453-454	.2
455	.4
456-461	.2
461/Kubert	.15
➥House of M	
462-478	.3
Ann 1	.50
Ann 2	.45
Ann 3	.14
Ann 4	.6
Ann 5	.5
Ann 6	.7
Ann 7	.5
Ann 8	.4
Ann 9	.10
Ann 10	.8
Ann 11-12	.4
Ann 13	.3
Ann 14	.6
Ann 15	.4
Ann 16	.2
Ann 17-18	.3
Ann 1995	.4
Ann '96-'98	.3
Ann '00-'01	.4

Uncle Sam
DC, 1997

1-2	.5

Uncle Sam Quarterly
QUALITY, 1941

1	.1500
2	.750
3	.600
4	.550
5-8	.500

Uncle Scrooge
DELL, 1953

4	.310
5	.220
6-7	.185
8	.140
9-10	.125
11-15	.100
16-20	.80
21-30	.65
31-40	.55
41-50	.45
51-70	.40
71	.38
72-100	.32
101-120	.20
121-140	.18
141-160	.12
161-171	.10
172-176	.15
177-178	.25
179	.225
180	.35
181-185	.15
186-197	.10
198	.15
199-200	.10
201-219	.6
220-240	.5
241-260	.4
261-299	.3
300-308	.2
309-318	.7

Uncle Scrooge
GEMSTONE, 2003

319-349	.7

Unknown Soldier
DC, 1977

205-210	.5
211-229	.4
230-247	.3
248-249	.5
250-267	.3
268	.5

USA Comics
TIMELY, 1941

1	.12000
2	.4400
3	.3100
4-5	.2500
6	.3550
7	.3400
8-10	.2250
11-12	.1500
13-17	.1250

Vampirella
WARREN, 1969

1	.325
2	.125
3	.200
4-5	.75
6-9	.70
10	.30
11-15	.43
16-25	.30
26	.20
27	.30
28-36	.25
37-45	.20
46	.25
47-50	.20
51-70	.17
71-99	.16
100	.30
101-111	.16
112	.45
113	.195
Ann 1	.175
Special 1	.30

Vault of Horror
E.C., 1950

12	.4000
13	.800
14	.725
15	.600
16	.500
17-19	.360
20-25	.275
26-30	.225
31-40	.185

Villains United
DC, 2005

1	.12
1/2nd	.8
1/3rd	.3
2	.5
3-5	.3
6	.4

Wacky Races
GOLD KEY, 1969

1	.40

△ #184

WONDER WOMAN

Wonder Women?

During a time-tossed story arc, Wonder Woman interacted with her mother during Hippolyta's time in the costume. The arc featured a new Villainy Inc., dinosaurs, U-boats, and other elements to appeal to Wonder Woman fans young and old.

Fights Villainy, Inc.

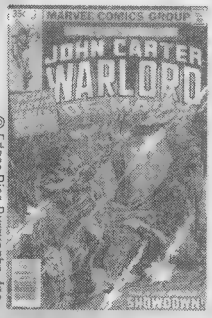
Golden Age crossover

image © 2002 DC

THE BOTTOM LINE

NM Price	176 JAN 02	177 FEB 02	178 MAR 02	179 APR 02	180 MAY 02	181 JUN 02	182 AUG 02	183 SEP 02	184 OCT 02	185 NOV 02
	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2

John Carter #7 ★★★



© Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc.

Marvel
Dec 1977 • 17 pp.
Writer: Marv Wolfman
Pencils: Gil Kane
Inks: Tom Sutton
Cover: Kane, Rudy Nebres

"Air Pirates of Mars, Part 7: Dejah Thoris Lives!"

Dejah Thoris escapes from the Council of Five headquarters and helps regain the Atmosphere Factory for Barsoom. Husband and wife are once more reunited!

What a woman! Princess. Wife. Spy? Dejah Thoris, in this installment of "Air Pirates," deceives a former soldier in her father's army into revealing exactly who and what The Council of Five is.

Marv Wolfman, in this pivotal segment, builds on the character of Dejah Thoris, and we quickly learn that she is Carter's match in intellect and temperament.

Near Mint copy **9.8** — **Then 35¢ NOW $3**

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
2	.26
3-7	.20

Walking Dead
IMAGE, 2003

1	.35
2	.32
3	.15
4	.12
4/A	.6
5	.4
6-31	.3

Walt Disney's Comics and Stories
DELL, 1940

1	.20000
2	.7500
3	.3400
4	.2050
5	.1250
6-7	.1100
8-9	.900
10	.850
11-15	.750
16-17	.650
18	.625
19-30	.580
31	.3700
➥Barks Donald starts	
32	.2000
33	.1200
34	.950
35-36	.840
37	.435
38	.650
39-40	.580
41-46	.500
47-50	.475
51-60	.375
61-70	.305
71-80	.240
81-87	.215
88	.270
89-90	.210
91-97	.190
98	.365
➥Unc Scrooge starts	
99	.190
100	.200
101-112	.155
113-116	.90
117	.130
118-123	.85
124	.130
125	.190
126-129	.130
130-133	.125
134	.200
135-139	.105
140	.225
➥1st Barks Gyro	
141-150	.94
151-170	.88
171-200	.80
201-240	.75
241-260	.60
261-283	.50
284-285	.25
286	.28
287	.25
288-289	.28
290	.25
291-293	.28
294-296	.25
297-308	.28
309-311	.25
312	.28
313-334	.14
335	.25
336-341	.14
342-351	.25
351/Poster	.30
351/No poster	.20
352	.25
352/Poster	.30
352/No poster	.20
353	.25
353/Poster	.30
353/No poster	.20
354	.25
354/Poster	.30
354/No poster	.20
355	.25
355/Poster	.30
355/No poster	.20
356	.25
356/Poster	.30
356/No poster	.20
357	.25
357/Poster	.30
357/No poster	.20
358	.25
358/Poster	.30
358/No poster	.20
359	.25
359/Poster	.30
359/No poster	.20
360	.25
360/Poster	.30
360/No poster	.20
361-400	.25
401-429	.14
430	.10
431-432	.12
433	.10
434-436	.12
437-438	.10
439-440	.12
441-443	.10
444-445	.6
446-465	.10
466	.6
467-478	.10
479	.30
480	.125
481-484	.30
485-510	.10
511	.15
512-513	.12
514-516	.8
517-518	.5
519	.14
520-549	.10
550	.6
551-554	.4
555-556	.3
557-573	.4
574-577	.5
578-579	.3
580	.5
581-584	.3
585	.5
586-597	.3
598-599	.4
600-611	.6
612-648	.7

Walt Disney's Comics & Stories
GEMSTONE, 2003

634-661	.7

Wanted
IMAGE, 2003

1	.12
1/A	.9
1/B	.8
1/C	.3
1/D	.6
1/E	.5
2	.3
2/B	.4
2/C	.5
3	.3
3/A	.4
4-6	.3

War
CHARLTON, 1975

1	.8
2-10	.5
11-22	.3
23-49	.2

War Is Hell
MARVEL, 1973

1	.25
2	.18
3-5	.14
6-8	.10
9-15	.8

Warlock
MARVEL, 1972

1	.32
2-3	.15
4-5	.8
6-8	.7
9-11	.10
12	.8
12/30¢	.15
13	.8
13/30¢	.15
14	.8
14/30¢	.15
15	.8

Watchmen
DC, 1986

1	.8
2-3	.5
4-12	.4

Web of Horror
MAJOR MAGAZINES, 1969

1	.90
2	.55
3	.65
➥1st Wrightson cvr	

Web of Spider-Man
MARVEL, 1985

1	.8
2	.6
3	.5
4-10	.4
11-28	.3
29	.5
30	.4
31-32	.5
33-35	.3
36	.4
37	.3
38	.5
39-47	.3
48	.8
➥1st Demogoblin	
49	.2
50	.3
51-57	.2
58	.3
59	.8
60-61	.3
62-89	.2
90	.5
91-99	.2
100	.4
101-105	.2
106/Collector's	.5
106	.1
107-113	.2
113/Collector's	.4
114-116	.2
117	.3
117/Variant	.5
118	.3
119	.2
119/Collector's	.6
120	.4
121-124	.2
125	.3
125/Variant	.4
126-129	.2
129/Collector's	.5
Ann 1	.7
Ann 2	.6
Ann 3-10	.3
SS 1	.4

Weird Fantasy
E.C., 1950

1	.1150
2	.500
3-4	.425
5	.335
6-10	.240
11-13	.180
14	.300
15	.200
16-19	.170
20	.200
21	.285
22	.140

Weird Mystery Tales
DC, 1972

1	.30
2	.20
3	.15
4-10	.12
11-20	.10
21	.15
22-24	.10

Weird Science
E.C., 1950

1	.1450
2	.625
3-4	.575
5-10	.360
11-14	.230
15-18	.260
19-22	.335

Weird Science-Fantasy
E.C., 1954

23-24	.235
25	.270
26	.220
27	.235
28	.260
29	.450

Weird Suspense
ATLAS-SEABOARD, 1975

1	.12
2	.8
3	.7

Weird Terror
COMIC MEDIA, 1952

1	.500
2-4	.300
5	.230
6	.260
7	.230
8	.260
9-10	.200
11	.260
12	.190
13	.200

Weird War Tales
DC, 1971

1	.125
2	.75
3	.45
4-5	.30
6-10	.20
11-20	.12
21-31	.8
32-50	.6
51-92	.5
93	.6
94-101	.5
102-124	.4

Weird Western Tales
DC, 1972

12	.45
13	.30
14-15	.20
16-28	.12
29	.16
30-42	.8
43-50	.6
51-70	.5

Weird Wonder Tales
MARVEL, 1973

1	.14
2-3	.7
4-7	.5
8-15	.4
15/30¢	.20
16	.4
16/30¢	.20
17	.4
17/30¢	.20
18-22	.4

Weird Worlds
DC, 1972

1	.12
2-5	.7
6	.8
7	.6
8-10	.5

Wendy, the Good Little Witch
HARVEY, 1960

1	.60
2	.40
3-5	.28
6-10	.22
11-15	.14
16-20	.12
21-25	.8
26-30	.6
31-40	.5
41-50	.4
51-60	.3
61-93	.2
94-97	.1

Werewolf By Night
MARVEL, 1972

1	.80
2	.30
3	.15
4	.18
5-10	.15
11-14	.12
15	.15
16-17	.12
18-20	.10
21-31	.8
32	.60
➥1st Moon Knight	
33	.30
34	.8
35-36	.5
37	.10
38	.5
38/30¢	.15
39	.5
39/30¢	.15
40-41	.5
42	.12
43	.18

Other Flashbacks

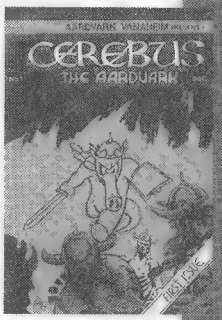
On this date...

DEC 1939 — The first comic book with a metallic logo was published in the form of ***Silver Streak Comics*** #1.

DEC 1940 — **Green Hornet** first appeared in comics with ***Green Hornet Comics*** #1.

DEC 1941 — Lovable teenager **Archie Andrews** got his debut in ***Pep Comics*** #22. The issue also included the debut of **Veronica Lodge**.

DEC 1977 — Underground publishing was forever changed with the first appearance of **Cerebus** in **Dave Sim**'s ***Cerebus the Aardvark*** #1. The mini-series ran 300 issues over nearly three decades.



DEC 1980 — **DC** introduced the assassin known as **Deathstroke the Terminator** in ***New Teen Titans*** #2.

DEC 1989 — **Marvel**'s teen team **The New Warriors** first appeared in ***Thor*** #411 in a cameo, followed by a larger role in #412.

— By Ray Sidman
from the Comics Buyer's Guide archives

Fights Cheetah — New hair-do — Flash appears

	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195	196	197	198	199	200
	DEC 02	FEB 03	MAR 03	APR 03	MAY 03	JUN 03	JUL 03	AUG 03	SEP 03	OCT 03	NOV 03	DEC 03	JAN 04	FEB 04	MAR 04
NM Price	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$4

PRICE GUIDE KEY:
OTHER CGC GRADES

Slabbed CGC 9.8 (NM/M) is **3 times** the CGC 9.4 price above
CGC 9.0 (VF/NM) is **2/5 (40%)** of CGC 9.4

CGC 9.6 (NM+) is **1.5 times** CGC 9.4
CGC 8.0 (VF) is **1/5 (20%)** of CGC 9.4

X-kai Vol. 1

Whoever said florists are boring? Not so, sniffs "Death" Kaito Yagami. Aside from looking like Rupert Everett, he is an assassin whose weapons of choice are botanical poisons. Getting his jobs via his gal pal Sugaru, this flowery beauty also is scented with a conscience, which proves troubling when his clients lack one.

TOKYOPOP
WRITER:
ASAMI TOHJOH
ARTIST:
ASAMI TOHJOH
B/W • 192 Pos.
$9.99

In his first case, a doctor hires Kaito to eliminate an infatuated blind woman who is a malpractice liability. Next, Kaito has a contract on an ailing mob boss, who offers to care for a cheating subordinate's sick girlfriend as long as the young yakuza donates a kidney to him. Applying his fees to aid his own sick brother, can Kaito catch a killer who copycats his signature style of using white lilies? Then, will his sympathy for an abused orphan boy get him caught by the dogged Detective Koda?

Asami Tohjoh apes a *bishonen* style but, instead of delivering expected dreamboat goods, makes her hero a vigilante. The acts of bloody stabbing may confuse, yet titillate, female fans of the genre.

★★½ — **Oliver Chin**

www.tokyopop.com
ISBN: 1-59816-373-6

UNSLABBED Near Mint

What If...?
MARVEL, 1977
1 15
2 10
3-5 8
6-10 5
11-12 4
13 5
14-15 4
16 3
17 4
18-26 3
27 5
28 8
29 3
30-31 8
32-34 3
35 5
36-45 3
46 4
47 3
Special 1 4

What If...?
MARVEL, 1989
-1 2
1 4
2-20 3
21-23 2
24 4
25 3
26-49 2
50 3
51-104 2
105 12
106-113 2
114 3

Wheelie and the Chopper Bunch
CHARLTON, 1975
1 20
➥Incl. Byrne art
2 12
3-7 10

Where Creatures Roam
MARVEL, 1970
1 25
2-8 10

Where Monsters Dwell
MARVEL, 1970
1 32
2-5 10
6-11 8
12 10
13-31 8
32-38 7

Whiz Comics
FAWCETT, 1940
1 70000
➥1st Captain Marvel
2 5200
3 3400
4 2800
5 2250
6 1650
7 1725
8-9 1650
10 1250
11-12 1100
13-14 1075
15 1250
16-18 1100
19-20 750
21 800
22-24 600
25 6200
➥1st Capt. Marvel Jr.
26 550
27-30 525
31-32 460
33 525
34 365
35 410
36-40 365
41-43 260
44 300
45-50 260
51-60 210
61-70 175
71-82 150
83-100 130
101-120 110
121-152 100
153-155 200

WildC.A.T.s
IMAGE, 1992
0 3
1 4
1/3D 5
1/Gold 10
1/Variant 5
2 4
3-10 3
11 15
11/Holofoil 22
12 8
13 6
14-24 3
25 5
26-49 3
50 4
50/Variant 5
Ann 1 3
Special 1 4

Wild Frontier
CHARLTON, 1955
1 60
2-6 40
7 50

Witchblade
IMAGE, 1995
1/2 15
1 25
1/B 15
2 18
2/A 15
3 10
4-5 8
6-7 6
8-10 5
10/DF 20
11-14 4
14/Gold 6
15 4
16-18/A 3
19-25 3
25/A 4
25/B 8
25/C 15
26-49 3
50 5
50/DF 15
51-74 3
75-75/Variant 5
76-80 3
80/Holiday 5
80/Cho-80/Land 3
80/Conv 5
81-99 3
100 5
101 3
500 5

Witches Tales
HARVEY, 1951
1 310
2 260
3-10 210
11-16 190
17-19 225
20-24 190
25-28 165

Witching Hour
DC, 1969
1 150
2 70
3 50
4-6 25
7 18
8-13 15
14-51 10
52-66 8
67-85 5

Wolverine
MARVEL, 1982
1 25
2 18
3 17
4 16

Wolverine
MARVEL, 1988
-1 2
1/2 3
1/2/Ltd. 8
1 10
2 6
3-5 5
6 4
7-9 5
10 8
11-14 4
15 5
16-19 4
20 5
21-23 4
24-40 3
41 4
42 2
43 3
44 2
45-49 3
50 4
51-56 2
57 3
58-74 2
75 4
76-79 2
80 8
81-84 2
85 3
85/Variant 4
86-87 2
87/Deluxe 4
88 2
88/Deluxe 4
89 2
89/Deluxe 4
90 2
90/Deluxe 4
91-98 2
99 4
100 5
100/Variant 8
101-124 2
125 4
125/A-125/B 10
126-130 2
131 5
131/A 3
132-133 2
133/Variant 4
134-144 2
145 4
145/Gold foil 25
145/DF 50
145/Silver foil 30
145/Nabisco 400
146 5
147-149 2
150 3
150/DF 14
151-165 2
166 3
167-189 2
Ann 1995 4
Ann '96-'97 3
Ann '99-'00 4
Ann 2001 3
Special 1 4

Wolverine
MARVEL, 2003
1 7
2 5
3 4
4-9 3
10 2
11-15 3
16 2
17 3
18-20 2
20/Variant 90
➥Retailer incentive
20/Texas 20
➥Texas con premium
21-26 2
26/Silvestri 15
26/DF 20
27 2
27/Quesada 25
28-29 2
30-35 3
36 5
36/Quesada 12
37-46 3

Wolverine: Origins
MARVEL, 2006
1-6 3

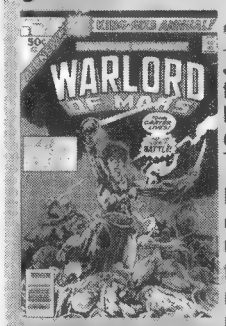
Wolverine: The End
MARVEL, 2004
1 7
1/Texas 15
2 6
3 5
4 4
5-6 3

Wolverine: The Origin
MARVEL, 2001
1 25
1/DF 50
2 12
2/DF 24
3 8
3/DF 20
4 5
4/DF 20
5 4
5/DF 20
6 5
6/DF 20

Wonder Woman
DC, 1942
1 17000
2 3100
3 1900
4 1200
5 1050
6-10 900
11-20 650
21-23 450
24 600
25 450
26-30 425
31-40 415
41-44 400
45 500
46-50 400
51-60 310
61-70 240
71-79 190
80-90 155
91-100 120
101-104 90
105 600
➥1st Wonder Girl
106-110 80
111-130 70
131-149 56
150-159 50
160-161 30
162 40
163-170 30
171-180 25
181-190 33
191-200 40
201-210 14
211 25
➥100-page issue
212-213 11
214 30
➥100-page issue
215-218 11
219-236 7
237-260 6
261-268 5
269-279 4
280 3
281-283 5
284-299 3
300 6
301-329 3

Wonder Woman
DC, 1987
0 6
1 4
2-10/A 3
11-84 2
85 10
➥1st Deodato art
86 4

RETROVIEW
John Carter Ann. #1 ★★★½



Marvel
1977 • 35 pp.
Writer: Marv Wolfman
Pencils: Sal Buscema
Inks: Ernie Chan
Cover: Gil Kane, Rudy Nebres

"When Walk the Ancient Dead"

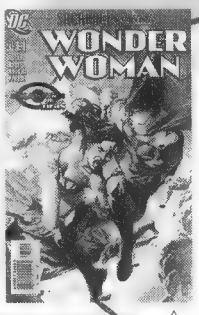
John Carter saves Pan Dan Chee from a horde of Tharks and finds himself in the company of living ancients.

Marv Wolfman, Sal Buscema, and Ernie Chan present an annual that celebrates what readers love about Carter: his lust for life and his ability to survive incredible odds. Add to the mix a bit of history, scholarship, and a misunderstood individual seeking to do the right thing, and you have "When Walk the Ancient Dead."

The only artistic weakness, if any, is the "Conan" look of Carter. Even so, this comes highly recommended for any Carter fan.

© Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc.

Near CGC copy: **9.8** **Then 50¢ NOW $2**



△ #219

WONDER WOMAN

Sowing the Crisis seeds

Much like its 1st series, *Wonder Woman* (2nd series) ended its run as a fresh Crisis was brewing in the DC universe. The original series ended during *Crisis on Infinite Earths*, while this run ended during *Infinite Crisis* and the death of Maxwell Lord.

Image © 2005 DC

Batman appears ▼ Fights Joker ▼

	201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210
	APR 04	MAY 04	JUN 04	JUL 04	AUG 04	SEP 04	OCT 04	NOV 04	JAN 05	FEB 05
MM Price	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2	$2

THE BOTTOM LINE

Other John Carter jaunts

© Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc.

Aside from this Marvel outing, Edgar Rice Burroughs' John Carter of Mars has gotten short shrift in comics over the years. While Dell and, later, Gold Key, had a long-running *Tarzan* series, the adventures of the transplanted Virginian only received three Gold Key issues in 1964.

Prior to that, Dell had given John Carter a trio of *Four Color* try-outs in #375, #437, and #488.

When the Burroughs' licenses came to DC, John Carter ran as a back-up in *Tarzan*, where one could later find adventures of Carson of Venus and an adaptation of *Beyond the Farthest Star*. Tarzan, John Carter, and Carson's latest adventures can be found at Dark Horse.

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
50	.3
50/Variant	.4
51-54	.2
54/Silver	.25
55-62	.2
62/A	.3
63-79	.2
80	.3
80/Holofoil	.10
80/DF	.7
81-98	.2
99-100/G	.3
101-104	.2
105	.3
106-113	.2
114	.5
115-144	.2
145-147	.3
148	.2
149	.3
150	.4
151	.3
152	.2
153-157	.3

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
158	.2
159	.3
160-164	.2
165	.3
166-169	.2
170-Ann 3	.3
Ann 1995	.4
Ann '96-'98	.3
Ann '99-'01	.4
Ashcan 1	.1

Young Allies Comics
TIMELY, 1941

1	.11500
2	.3000
3	.2100
4	.3000
5	.1300
6-8	.875
9	.900
10	.875
11-14	.720
15-20	.615

Young Men
MARVEL, 1950

4	.120
5-10	.70
11-23	.52
24 ➥Cap, Namor origin	.1600
25	.775
26-28	.750

Y: The Last Man
DC, 2002

1	.30
2	.15
3	.5
4-5	.4
6-49	.3

Zero Hour: Crisis in Time
DC, 1994

4-2	.2
1	.3

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
0	.2
Ashcan 1	.1

Zorro
DELL, 1959

8-9	.70
10-12	.68
13-15	.65

Zorro
GOLD KEY, 1966

1	.70

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
2-4	.38
5-7	.34
8-9	.28

Zorro
MARVEL, 1990

1	.3
2-12	.2

Zorro
NBM, 2005

1-6	.3

Got pricing or collecting questions? Visit www.cbgxtra.com and ask away!

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
87-93	.3
94-99	.2
100	.3
100/Variant	.4
101-119	.2
120	.3
121-199	.2
200	.4
201-213	.2
214 ➥Inf. Crisis tie	.25
215	.10
216	.7
217	.6
218	.5
219 ➥Max Lord dies	.15
219/2nd ➥2nd print	.3
220	.12
221-1000000	.3
Ann 1-2	.2
Ann 3	.3
Ann 4	.4
Ann 5	.3
Ann 6	.4
Ann 7-8	.3
Special 1	.2

Woody Woodpecker
DELL, 1952

16-20	.14
21-50	.12
51-72	.9
73-75	.25
76-100	.15
101-120	.10
121-130	.6
131-170	.3
171-187	.2
188-189	.10
190-191	.25
193-201	.15

World's Best Comics
DC, 1941

1	.18000

World's Finest Comics
DC, 1941

2	.4000
3	.2900

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
4-5	.1975
6-7	.1450
8	.1275
9	.1300
10	.1050
11-16	.895
17	.875
18-20	.805
21-30	.610
31-40	.530
41-60	.430
61-64	.320
65	.540
66-70	.370
71 ➥1st Sup/Bat team	.900
72-73	.550
74-80	.375
81-90	.235
91-93	.175
94 ➥Sup/Bat team origin	.525
95-99	.175
100	.260
101-110	.105
111-121	.85
122-142	.75
143-150	.52
151-152	.50
153-155	.45
156 ➥Bizarro, Joker app.	.55
157-161	.45
162-177	.38
178-180	.30
181-190	.25
191-197 ➥Sup/Flash race	.20
198-199 ➥Sup/Flash race	.80
200-212	.16
213-228	.14
229-270	.6
271-300	.4
301-323	.3

Worlds of Fear
FAWCETT, 1952

2	.325
3	.250
4-9	.200
10	.475

Worlds Unknown
MARVEL, 1973

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
1	.17
2	.10
3	.7
4-8	.5

Wulf the Barbarian
ATLAS-SEABOARD, 1975

1	.12
2	.9
3-4	.8

Xenozoic Tales
KITCHEN SINK, 1987

1	.8
2-5	.6
6-10	.5
11-14	.4

X-Men
MARVEL, 1963

1 ➥1st X-Men	.7000
2	.1900
3	.1030
4	.900
5	.550
6	.500
7	.475
8-10	.360
11	.300
12 ➥1st Juggernaut	.500
13	.275
14	.250
15-16	.190
17-20	.100
21-27	.90
28 ➥1st Banshee	.155
29-34	.90
35 ➥Spider-Man app.	.150
36-37	.65
38	.80
39-40	.90
41-48	.65
49-51	.75
52	.65
53-57	.72
58 ➥1st Havok	.100
59-65	.70
66 ➥Last new issue	.80
67-80	.35

	UNSLABBED Near Mint
81-85	.40
86-93	.35
94 ➥2nd New X-Men	.500
95 ➥Thunderbird dies	.85
96	.55
97-98	.48
98/30¢	.125
99	.48
99/30¢	.125
100 ➥Phoenix orig. starts	.60
100/30¢	.135
101 ➥Phoenix origin	.55
102-105	.28
105/35¢	.60
106	.28
106/35¢	.60
107	.28
107/35¢	.60
108 ➥1st Byrne X-Men	.35
109 ➥1st Weapon alpha	.30
110-115	.20
116-119 ➥1st Alpha Flight	.16
120-121	.28
122-128	.12
129 ➥1st Kitty, E Frost	.20
130-135	.12
136	.11
137 ➥Phoenix dies	.14
138	.8
139-141 ➥Future Past	.11

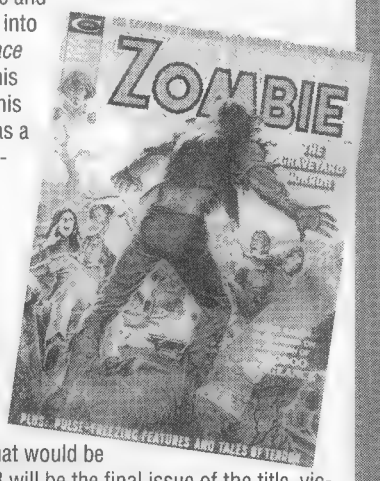
X-Men
MARVEL, 1991

-1	.3
-1/A	.4
1/Beast	.5
1/Colossus	.3
1/Cyclops	.4
1/Magneto	.3
1/Collector's	.5
2	.4
3-20	.3
21-24	.2
25	.5
25/Gold	.25
25/Museum	.30
26-29	.2
30	.3
31-49	.2

Tony's Back Page

"I Killed a Zombie!"

July 1953. Writer and editor Stan Lee and artist Bill Everett kill a man and turn him into a zombie for a memorable story in *Menace* #5. The undead creature rebels against his zombie-master when ordered to kidnap his own daughter. It should be noted this was a kinder, gentler zombie than the brain-eating, intestine-chomping monsters who have captivated fans in recent years.



1973. Writer and editor Roy Thomas remembers the story and recasts its unnamed "hero" as ruthless businessman Simon Garth for the black-and-white *Tales of the Zombie* magazine. The original is reprinted in the first issue, sandwiched between new Garth stories written by Steve Gerber.

Late 1974. Editor Tony Isabella — that would be me — is told that *Tales of the Zombie* #8 will be the final issue of the title, victim of a general slump in Marvel's horror-magazine sales. Thinking the character wouldn't be of much use in Marvel's color comics, I went to publisher Lee for permission to "kill" the Zombie in that final issue. Stan thought it was a great idea.

With Gerber having moved on to other assignments, and since it was my idea to give the Garth series a definite ending, I assigned this finale to myself and Assistant Editor Chris Claremont. I plotted the story and wrote full scripts for its first and third chapters. Claremont wrote the middle chapter, the one that had to cover the most ground. It was my way of recognizing his budding, but clearly immense, talent. That's my story and I'm sticking to it.

Shortly thereafter, I decided to leave my staff position at Marvel and go freelance. Among the last editorial duties I performed were editing Claremont's script, having him edit my scripts, and sending the scripts to the Philippines to be drawn by the amazing artists of that island nation. Once the finished art arrived at the Marvel offices, it would be up to Don McGregor and David Anthony Kraft to see my final issue through production.

As I handed over my editorial crown, I had no inkling I would soon have to kill Simon Garth again.

To be continued ...

— Tony Isabella

JLA appears — Flash appears — Goes to $2.50 — Fights Checkmate — Max Lord dies; second printings exist — OMACs attack — Fights Cheetah — Superman appears

211	212	213	214	215	216	217	218	219	220	221	222	223	224	225	226
MAR 05	APR 05	MAY 05	JUN 05	MAY 05	JUN 05	JUL 05	AUG 05	SEP 05	OCT 05	NOV 05	DEC 05	JAN 06	FEB 06	MAR 06	MAY 06
$2	$2	$2	$25	$10	$7	$6	$5	$15	$12	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3	$3

PRICE GUIDE KEY: OTHER CGC GRADES
Slabbed CGC 9.8 (NM/M) is **3 times** the CGC 9.4 price above
CGC 9.0 (VF/NM) is **2/5 (40%)** of CGC 9.4
CGC 9.6 (NM+) is **1.5 times** CGC 9.4
CGC 8.0 (VF) is **1/5 (20%)** of CGC 9.4

ENTERTAINMENT CARDS MARKET REPORT

By RAY SIDMAN

Rittenhouse pouring it on

Rittenhouse Archives plans to release a slew of new sets in the coming months, including four in November alone.

Two of the November sets honor *Star Trek — Star Trek: The Original Series 40th Anniversary* on Nov. 1 and *Legends of Star Trek: Commander William T. Riker* a week later. The other two sets are *James Bond 007: Casino Royale Preview Set* also on Nov. 8 and *The Complete Avengers* on Nov. 22.

December brings *Battlestar Galactica Season Two* on Dec. 13.

In early 2007, the company will release *Xena: Dangerous Liaisons* on Jan. 2 and *Stargate SG-1 Season Nine* on Feb. 21.

More information is available at *www.scifihobby.com*.

Lost Season Two due Nov. 15

The second season of the hit television series Lost is commemorated in an entertainment card set due out Nov. 15 from Inkworks. The set highlighting the ABC show, now in its third season, will feature 90 cards.

Lost Season Two will come in seven-card packs, retailing for $2.49 apiece. Each box will contain one autograph card.

Other inserts include "?" — a nine-card foil puzzle and "Betrayal" — six foil cards focusing on the character Michael.

Upcoming releases

- Oct. 31 — *Pokémon World Championship Decks* (Nintendo)
- November — *Supernatural Season One* (Inkworks)
- November — *Smallville Season Five* (Inkworks)
- Nov. 1 — *Star Trek: The Original Series 40th Anniversary* (Rittenhouse)
- Nov. 8 — *James Bond 007: Casino Royale Preview Set* (Rittenhouse)
- Nov. 8 — *Legends of Star Trek: Commander William T. Riker* (Rittenhouse)
- Nov. 22 — *The Complete Avengers* (Rittenhouse)
- Dec. 13 — *Battlestar Galactica Season Two* (Rittenhouse)
- January — *Hellboy Animated Sword of Storms* (Inkworks)
- Jan. 2 — *Xena: Dangerous Liaisons* (Rittenhouse)
- February — *Veronica Mars Season Two* (Inkworks)
- Feb. 21 — *Stargate SG-1 Season Nine* (Rittenhouse)
- April — *Shrek the Third* (Inkworks)

Battlestar Galactica Premiere Edition
Rittenhouse Archives 2005

Set (72)	14.00
Roll Call Set (9)	20.00
Cylon Threat (9)	45.00
Quotable (9)	80.00
Sketch Card Case Topper	60.00
Tricia Helfer Costume Card	35.00
Katee Sackhoff Costume Card	30.00
Grace Park Costume Card	30.00
Katee Sackhoff Costume Card	30.00
Jamie Bamber Costume Card	20.00
Edward James Olmos Cost.	20.00
Michael Hogan Costume Card	20.00
Tricia Helfer Autograph	150.00
Katee Sackhoff Autograph	125.00
Aaron Douglas Autograph	25.00
Michael Hogan Autograph	25.00
Other Autographs	20.00

Battlestar Galactica Season 1
Rittenhouse Archives 2006

Set (81)	15.00
Crossroads set (9)	20.00
ArtiFEX set (9)	35.00
Number Six card	20.00
In Motion card	20.00
Women of Battlestar Gal.	75.00
Aaron Douglas costume card	35.00
James Callis costume card	30.00
Tricia Helfer costume card	45.00
Case Topper Dual Costume	50.00
Other costume cards	25.00
Kandyse McClure signed card	30.00
Tobias Mehler autograph card	25.00
Lorena Gale autograph card	25.00
Robert Wisden autograph	25.00
Jill Teed autograph card	25.00
Other autograph cards	20.00

The 4400
Inkworks 2006

Set (72)	15.00
Changed set (9)	40.00
Ripples set (6)	35.00
Turf Wars Boxtoppers (3)	20.00
Emerging Powers Case Topper	40.00
Jacqueline McKenzie Auto	75.00
Peter Coyote Autograph	50.00
Billy Campbell Autograph	50.00
Laura Allen Autograph	50.00
Kaj-Erik Eriksen Autograph	40.00
Brooke Nevin Autograph	45.00
David Eigenberg Autograph	35.00
Richard Kahan Autograph	35.00

Frankenstein
Artbox 2006

Set (72)	13.00
Horror-Glow set (9)	30.00
Film Cell Card	30.00
Boxtopper set (3)	20.00
Sketch Card	50.00
Frankenstein Frightful Figure	5.00
Bride Frightful Figure (regular)	5.00
Bride Frightful Figure (clear)	15.00

Family Guy Season 2
Inkworks 2006

Set (72)	14.00
Griffin Family Tree (9)	40.00
Life of Brian (6)	35.00
Boxtopper Set (3)	20.00
Casetopper Card	40.00
Alex Borstein Autograph	40.00
Adam Carolla Autograph	25.00
Michael McKean Autograph	25.00
Faith Ford Autograph	40.00
Jennifer Tilly Autograph	40.00
Wally Wingert Autograph	20.00
Tone Rodriguez Sketch	75.00
Mark Dos Santos Sketch	75.00
Nar Sketch card	60.00
John Czop Sketch	50.00
Billy Martinez Sketch	60.00
Chris Moreno Sketch	45.00
Joel A. Gomez Sketch	70.00
Rich Koslowski Sketch	50.00
Cynthia Cummens	75.00
James Rogovoy	60.00
Rudy Vasquez Sketch	80.00
Chance Raspberry	80.00
William O'Neill Sketch	70.00

Star Trek: The Original Series, Art & Images Of
Rittenhouse Archives 2005

Set (81)	14.00
Comic Book Art (61)	70.00
Animated Series	70.00
ArtiFex Czop Set (9)	90.00
Sketch Card	50.00
Case Topper	70.00
Multi-Case Incentive	90.00
Ricardo Maltalban Autograph	150.00
Majel Barrett Autograph	150.00
Walter Koenig Autograph	60.00
Grace Lee Whitney Autograph	60.00
Lee Meriweather Autograph	50.00
Joanne Linville Autograph	50.00
Kathryn Hays Autograph	50.00
Kate Woodville Autograph	50.00
Bobby Clark Autograph	40.00
William Windom Autograph	40.00
Michael Ansara Autograph	40.00

Star Wars Revenge of the Sith
Topps 2005

Set (90)	15.00
Etched Foil Puzzle (6)	20.00
Lenticular Morph (2)	25.00
Morphing Case Topper	50.00
Joe Corroney Sketch Card	65.00
Otis Frampton Sketch Card	100.00
Dan Norton Sketch Card	60.00
Dan Parsons Sketch Card	60.00
Matt Busch Sketch Card	30.00
Paul Gutierrez Sketch Card	35.00
Robert Teranishi Sketch Card	40.00
Ryan Benjamin Sketch Card	35.00
Sarah Wilkinson Sketch Card	35.00
James Hodgkins Sketch Card	300.00
Christian Dalla Vecchia Sketch	35.00
Grant Gould Sketch Card	35.00
Other Sketch Cards	25.00

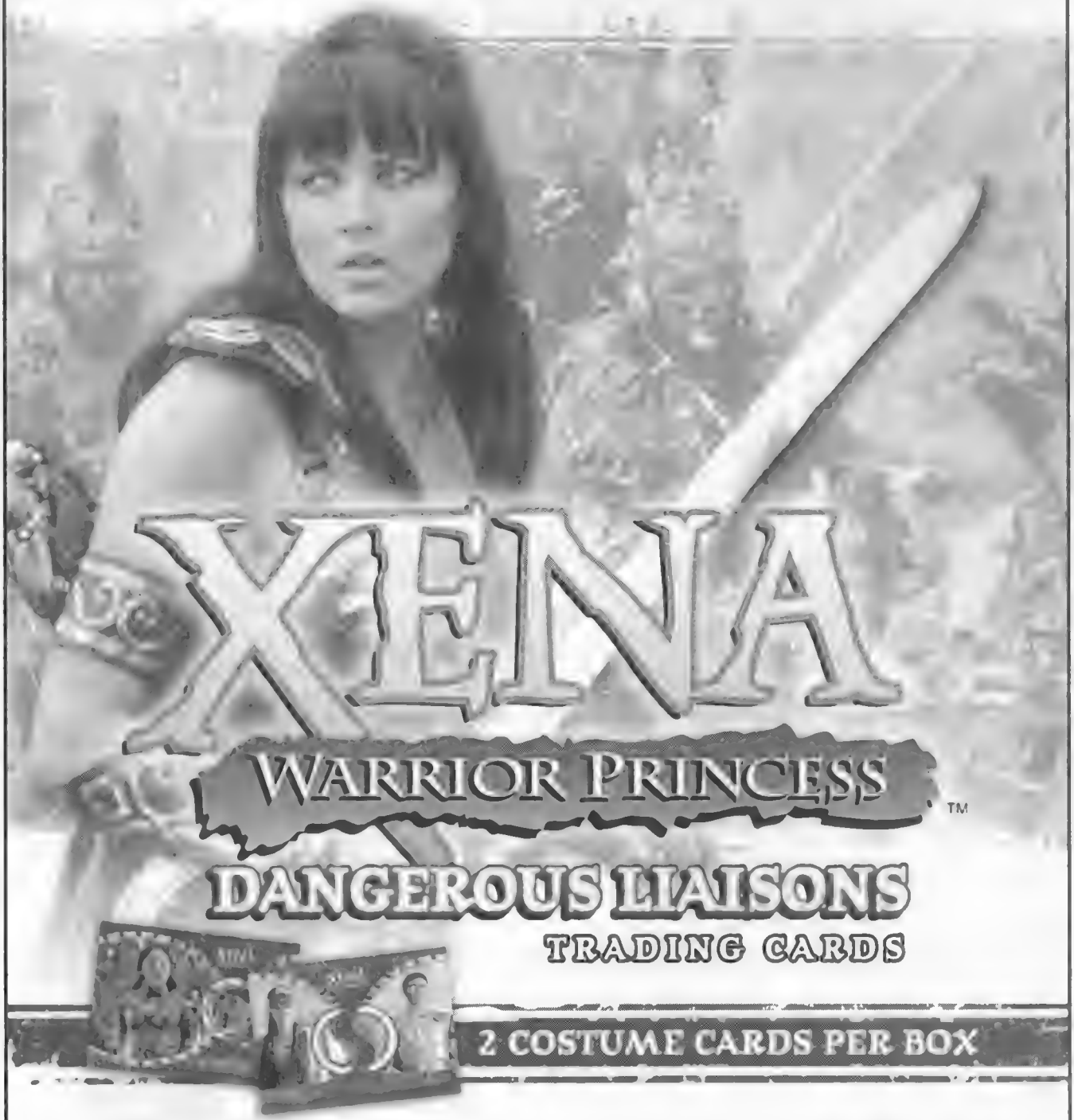
Stargate Atlantis Season 2
Rittenhouse Archives 2006

Set (72)	12.00
The Quotable (20)	23.00
Warriors In Action (9)	40.00
Atlantis Team set (7)	65.00
Atlantis in Motion (3)	100.00
Joe Flannigan Costume Card	35.00
David Hewlett Costume Card	35.00
Christopher Heyerdahl Cost	35.00
James Lafazanos Cost Card	35.00
Rachel Luttrell Dual Costume Case Topper	50.00
Claire Rankin Autograph	35.00
Brandy Ledford Autograph	35.00
Connor Trinneer Autograph	85.00
Torri Higginson Autograph	125.00
Other Autographs	20.00

X-Men 3: The Last Stand
Rittenhouse Archives 2006

Set (72)	12.00
Wolverine in Action (9)	30.00
Casting Call Set (16)	65.00
Art & Images Set (9)	85.00
Take a Stand Set (6)	95.00
Sketch Card	160.00
Aaron Stanford Autograph	30.00
Shawn Ashmore Autograph	35.00
Bill Duke Autograph	35.00
Daniel Cudmore Autograph	40.00
Brett Ratner Auto Case Topper	40.00
James Marsden Autograph	50.00
Stan Lee Auto Multi-Case	100.00
Patrick Stewart Autograph	250.00
Anna Paquin Autograph	300.00
Other Autographs	25.00

RITTENHOUSE ARCHIVES PRESENTS



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ARCHIVES LTD

Back from Frankfurt

Maintaining the vision

by **CHUCK ROZANSKI**

What keeps me going to Frankfurt year after year is a desire for maintaining a breadth of vision about what is happening in the worldwide market for comics.

I'm writing today's column with bleary eyes, as I am still recovering from the jetlag that resulted from my recent trip to the World Book Fair in Frankfurt, Germany. I've been attending the Frankfurt show for nearly 30 years now and have been exhibiting there regularly since 1986. That having been said, the costs of exhibiting in Frankfurt make it a cash-flow train wreck, as the meager gross sales that we generate from our tiny 12-foot-wide booth typically don't even cover the $2,900 rental charge. That leaves the combined cost of hotel, food, rental cars, and airfares as a total cash drain on Mile High Comics.

So why do I keep going back to Frankfurt? Well, the fact that I was born in a small Bavarian village just southeast of the city certainly has contributed to my desire to spend a week in Germany each year. As the older generation of my German family gradually passes away, however, and when the older buildings and gardens in my village that I remember with such fondness from my boyhood are steadily replaced with increasingly dense housing, that background motivation for my traveling to Germany greatly diminishes. In all honesty, at this stage of my life I would much rather spend early October running the pumpkin stand at our organic vegetable farm in Boulder than going through the hassles of international travel. If nothing else, I'd save a heck of a lot of money.

In the end, what keeps me going to Frankfurt year after year is a desire for maintaining a breadth of vision about what is happening in the worldwide market for comics. For most American comics dealers it may seem inconsequential to have an idea of what is happening in other comics markets around the world, but I find that I can gain valuable insights in Frankfurt each year that become applicable to my being able to bring success to Mile High Comics. Just as a case in point, the inspiration for our entire Internet marketing program came about as a result of several conversations I had in Frankfurt in October 1996. Ironically, those conversations were almost entirely with American publishers and editors, but the very nature of the Frankfurt show is that it attracts the best and the brightest publishers from every country in the world, so if you want to see the future, Frankfurt is an excellent venue for gaining perspective.

I wish I could lay out for you some of the specific ideas that I picked up in Frankfurt this year, but I've become a bit more wary in my old age about revealing too much to our competitors. Suffice it to say, however, that I now have at least one major program simmering in the back of my mind that may significantly alter the future of Mile High Comics. As soon as I am able to make some strides in bringing that program to fruition, I'll let you in on the specifics. It may be a while before that announcement is made, however, as this program will take a lot of time and working capital, neither of which is particularly plentiful right now.

In the meantime, I can report to you that I was on a panel in Frankfurt with six comics publishers from around the world (Spain, France, Germany, Korea, Japan, and Italy). With only one hour devoted to it, our panel was far too short for all of us to speak at any length about conditions in our home markets, but even the broad general overviews provided by each member of the panel were intriguing. For example, the Spanish publisher revealed that original material constitutes only 9% of the Spanish market for new comics. American reprints are 46% of the Spanish comics market, while manga reprints are another 41%. The remaining few percentage points are spread among reprints of European material. In Korea, on the other hand, manga reprints dominate, while home grown manhwa fills in the bulk of the remaining market share. In almost all instances, however, print publishing is strongly augmented by Internet publishing in Korea. The lady who represented Japanese publishers on the panel reported that, for the first time ever, periodical sales of manga in Japan were exceeded by manga in book form. That's not necessarily good news, as periodical sales have dropped by half during the past several years, as such electronic alternatives as videogames have steadily eroded the market for comics publishing in Japan. The Japanese new comics market

remains, however, about five times the entire market for comics in the United States.

The two primary observations that I took from the panel were: 1) American comics publishing is but a microcosm of the huge worldwide market for graphic storytelling; and 2) Comics publishers all around the world are seeing an erosion in their markets, as fewer young people read paper stories, while more and more consumers opt for electronic entertainment alternatives and the Internet. No one seems to have a good answer for how to halt this slide in consumer interest in traditional printed comics.

The diminishment of the European comics market was clearly illustrated in Frankfurt by the dramatic drop in the number of fans who attended the Fair in costume on Sunday. To explain, when the comics section of the book fair was first planned in 2000 (in part through initiatives that I originally presented), the comics area staff was given only a five-year contract. So it became imperative for them to draw as large a crowd as possible, to justify a renewal of their contract. To achieve this goal they came up with the idea of allowing comics fans into the fair for free on the last day (Sunday), if they would come in costume. This marketing worked incredibly well, as hundreds of fans showed up in costume (almost exclusively manga- and anime-inspired). By the second year of the costume contest, the number of participants increased to more than 1,000. This huge number of costumes, in turn, led to the tiny comics section (three rows containing about 80 booths) becoming the single most popular site in the entire book fair. Crowding was so ridiculous by 2004 that at midday on Sunday, the incredibly dense crush of bodies in the aisles prevented us from even being able to see the booth on the other side! It was estimated that more than 100,000 attendees of the book fair (out of a total attendance of about 350,000) worked their way through those three small comics aisles in 2004.

I had to miss the 2005 show, but going into Sunday of the 2006 show, I was prepared for yet another crush of bodies. There was, after all, a prize now being offered for the best manga- or anime-inspired costume by a Japanese publisher of a free trip for two to Tokyo for a week. All other factors aside, that one great offer should have brought the German girls in costume back in droves. Well, it just didn't happen. For whatever reason, the number of costumes on display on Sunday barely exceeded that of Saturday. I have no idea if there was some sort of alternative venue in the Frankfurt area that day (such as a manga-specific convention), but I was astonished at the dearth of costumes on Sunday. Without the costumes on display the crowds were also much smaller in the aisles. Still quite respectable, but not even 50% of 2004.

Another telling factor about the show was the sudden inclusion of card companies in the comics area. To the best of my knowledge, card companies were not really considered "publishers" under the older, more strict, guidelines of the fair. I can't remember seeing even a single card company booth among the more than 4,000 exhibitors who exhibited at the show prior to this year.

Suddenly, however, more than 25% of the booth space in the comics section of the book fair was taken up by card companies. Hmmm, that certainly doesn't speak well for the health and vitality of the European comics publishing community. I'll grant you that Frankfurt is a ridiculously expensive venue in which to exhibit, but my experience is that most European publishers are so determined to present themselves as being overwhelmingly successful, that they will spend their last Euro to make their booths in Frankfurt look great. The only other alternative is for them to not show up at all, which appears to be the option that many took this year.

My final comment would be about the actual sales in our booth. Our display this year consisted exclusively of American trade paperbacks with the majority being at least two years old. My daughter, Rowan, helped me run our booth, so we each brought one suitcase on the airplane, and one long box of new trade paperbacks and hardbacks. I had another 15 long boxes of trades in storage in Germany (shipping rates back to the United States from Europe are so prohibitive that it becomes completely nonviable to send leftovers back after the show), but all of my storage books were at least two years old, since I didn't attend the fair in 2005. All of the above having been said, our sales actually went up this year, as compared to 2004! Our new books sold well, but the older backlist also sold briskly. Had I brought enough new product and restock books, I might well have covered the entire cost of our booth, plus maybe even our hotel cost. Given how diminished the rest of the fair seemed overall, having such a positive result in our booth was quite a shock. My simple rationalization would be that while the manga market is down in Germany, interest in comics from the United States is up. I find that trend fascinating.

In next month's column, I'm going to go out on a limb a bit by giving my answer to the #1 question that I heard in Frankfurt: Why don't European reprints sell in America?

No one seems to have a good answer for how to halt this slide in consumer interest in traditional printed comics.

CHUCK ROZANSKI, owner of Mile High Comics, the world's largest online retail store, has been with *CBG* since the beginning, his first ad appearing in #8 in 1971. Be sure to write him at *chuck@milehighcomics.com*, and check out his website at *www.milehighcomics.com*!

CONVENTION PREVIEWS

by RAY SIDMAN

Mid-Ohio-Con moves to bigger location for 2006

Growth has made the organizers behind the annual Mid-Ohio-Con move to a new location this, its 26th, year: the Greater Columbus Convention Center's Battelle Hall in Columbus' downtown arena district.

Last year, the two-day show attracted more than 5,000 visitors. With this year's added space, hopes for the turnout are expectedly higher, said organizer Roger Price. With regard to the move, he stated, "We really just ran out of room there [the Hilton Columbus]. It was pretty tight, so we moved to a lot bigger facility."

As a result, he said dealers and visitors will have more room to operate in wider aisles that will feature larger displays.

Comic-book professionals who are slated to attend include:

- Al Feldstein
- Dick Ayers
- Adam Hughes
- Angel Medina
- Sean McKeever
- Mike Avon Oeming
- Brian Pulido
- Bob Schreck
- Arthur Suydam

Also, making his convention debut is Matthew Atherton, aka "Feedback," winner of The Sci-Fi Channel reality show created by Stan Lee, *Who Wants to Be a Super-Hero?* Feedback will also be featured in an upcoming Dark Horse comic book.

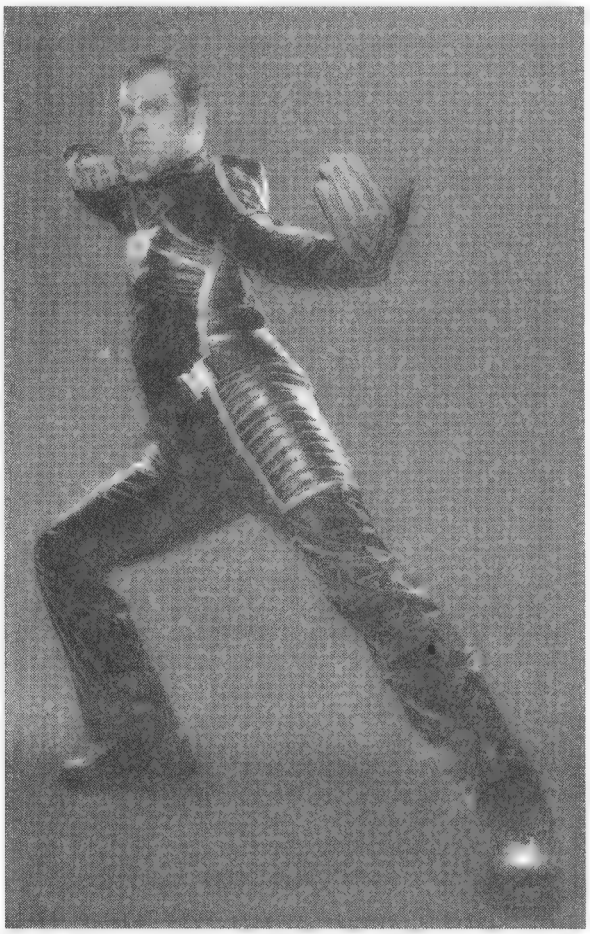
Other television celebrities will attend as well, such as Corin Nemec of *Stargate SG-1*, Mira Furlan of *Babylon 5* and *Lost*, and Emmy Award winner Marcia Wallace of *The Simpsons*.

CBG's own columnists Beau Smith and Tony Isabella will also be on-hand, with Isabella in charge of panels and other programs, and Smith promoting his new comic, *Cobb: Off the Leash*.

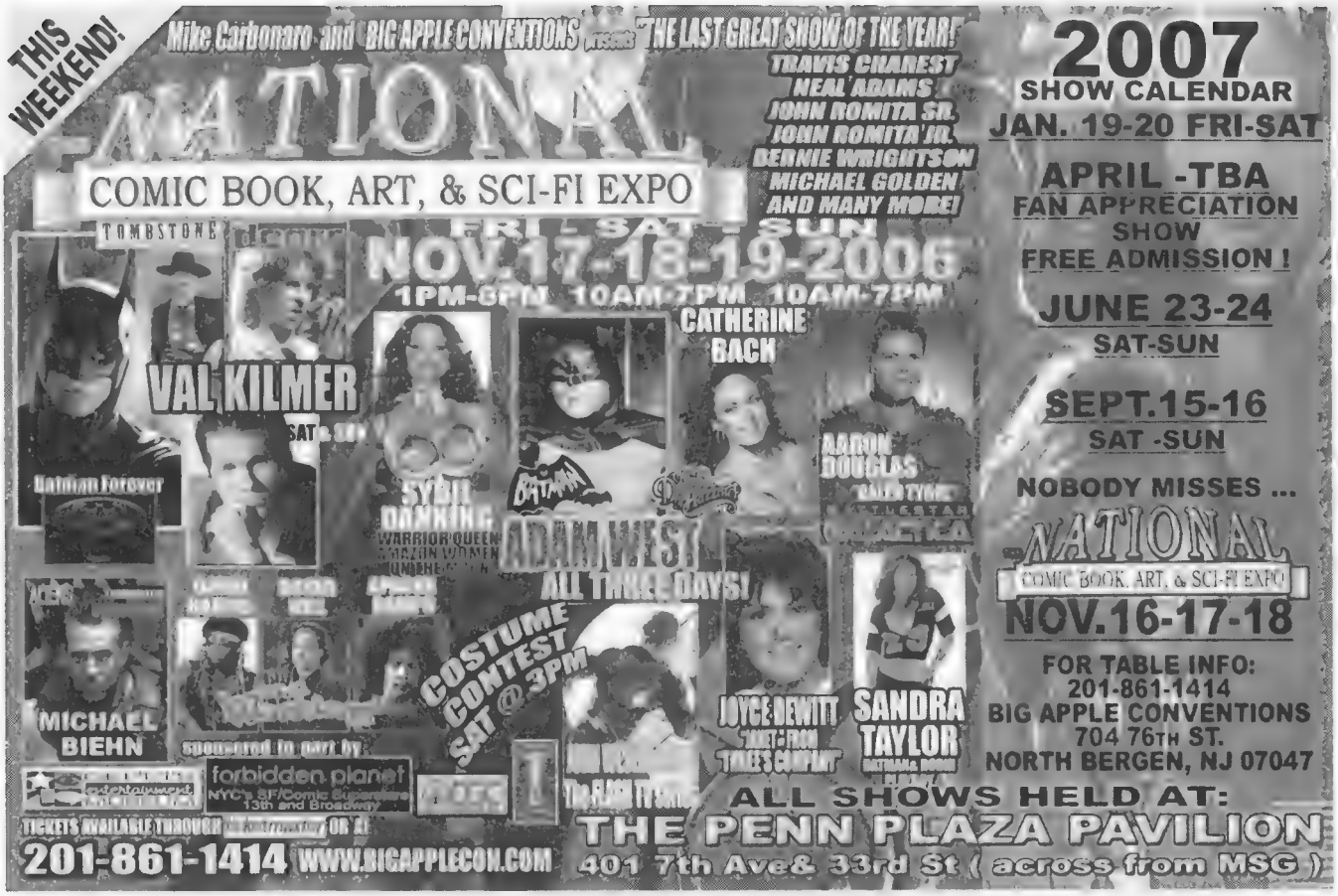
Price said this will be the first year since the show began in 1980 that tickets will be available through Ticket-Master. Also, advance tickets are $5 cheaper than last year: $15 per day. Price said this is one of the ways that he and the organizers are "playing with some new things" to help promote the show.

Other plans in the works include VIP memberships to the show with extended hours for those visitors. Price commented that plans are still in the works for this and other promotional ideas.

WHAT, WHERE, and WHEN
What: Mid-Ohio-Con 2006
Where: Battelle Hall, Greater Columbus Convention Center, 500 North High Street Columbus, Ohio 43215
When: Nov. 25-26
Hours: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday
10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday
Admission: Advance tickets: $15 per day; At the door: $20; ages 8 and under free with paid adult
For more information: Mid-Ohio-Con, P.O. Box 3831, Mansfield, OH 44907; (419) 526-1427; fax: (419) 730-0602; *answerman@midohiocon.com*; *www.midohiocon.com*



Matthew Atherton, known by his superhero persona Feedback, will make his convention debut at Mid-Ohio.



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Convention Calendar

By Ray Sidman

The most complete listing of comics events anywhere!

To have your event included, fax your listing to ***CBG* Con Calendar,** (715) 445-4087.
The e-mail is *showscalendar@krause.com.*

CALIFORNIA

Dec 16 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Dec 20 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Dec 23 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Dec 27 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Dec 30 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Jan 3 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Jan 6 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Jan 10 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Jan 13 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Jan 17 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Jan 20 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Jan 24 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Jan 27 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Jan 31 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Feb 3 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Feb 7 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Feb 10 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Feb 14 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Feb 17 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Feb 21 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Feb 24 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Feb 28 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Mar 2-4 CA, San Francisco. Wondercon. Moscone Center South, 747 Howard St. Comic-Con International, P.O. Box 128458, San Diego, CA 92112-8458. PH: 619-491-2475.

Mar 3 CA, City of Industry. Sat. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

Mar 7 CA, City of Industry. Wed. Comic Book & Collectible Show. 19649 San Jose Ave, SH: 10am-5pm, T: 250, A: free. Frank Zamarripa, 19649 San Jose Ave., City of Industry, CA 91748. PH: 909-444-7955.

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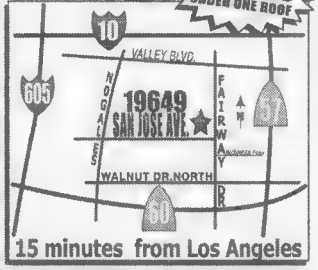

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Feb 16-18 FL, Orlando. MegaCon, Orange Cty. Conv. Ctr. SH: Fri. 1pm-7pm, Sat. 10am-6pm, Sun. 10am-5pm. MegaCon, PO Box 1097, Safety Harbor, FL 34695. PH: 727-796-5725.

ILLINOIS

Dec 17 IL, Bridgeview. Comic Books, NASCAR, Toys, Sports Cards, Hot Wheels & More Show, Oremus Center. 1 blk. W. of Harlem Ave. at 79th St., SH: 9am-1pm, T: 65-8', F: $35. for 1, $60. for 2, A: $2. John Leary, 9522 W. Shore Dr., Oak Lawn, IL 60453. PH: 708-423-1758.

Dec 30 IL, Orland Park. Comic Books, Sports Card & More Show, Civic Center. 147th St., 1 blk. W. La Grange Rd., SH: 9am-2pm, T: 60-6' & 8', F: $35.-$40., A: $1. John Leary, 9522 W. Shore Dr., Oak Lawn, IL 60453. PH: 708-423-1758.

Jan 14 IL, Peoria. Comicon, Signature Inn. 4112 N. Brandywine Dr., SH: 10am-4pm, A: free. Alan, PH: 309-657-1599.

Jan 21 IL, Gurnee. Comic Book Convention, Holiday Inn. 6161 W. Grand Ave., SH: 10am-3pm. Jim Libasci, PH: 847-336-9963.

Feb 3-4 IL, St. Charles. Chicgolandz Comic Con, DuPage Expo Center. SH: Sat. 11am-5pm, Sun. 10am-4pm, A: $6. per day. Zurko's Midwest Promos. Inc., 211 W. Green Bay St., Shawano, WI 54166. PH: 715-526-9769

INDIANA

Jan 20 IN, South Bend. Comic Book Show, Comfort Stes. 52933 US 933, SH: 10am-4pm, A: free. Alan, PH: 309-657-1599.

IOWA

Dec 15-23 IA, Council Bluffs. Comic Book Show, Mall of the Bluffs. SH: mall hours, T: 55, A: free. Tim Belk, 2811 Joplin St., Joplin, MO 64804. PH: 417-781-4422.

Dec 16 IA, Bettendorf. Comic Book Show, Ramada Inn. 3020 Utica Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, A: free. Alan, PH: 309-657-1599.

MASSACHUSETTS

Dec 16 MA, Tewksbury. Supershow, Elks Hall. 777 South St.; SH: 9am-2pm, F: $35. for 1, $60. for 2. Bob Larocque, 138 Kimball Hill Rd., Hudson, NH 03051. PH: 603-880-7528.

Feb 11 MA, Chelmsford. Comic Book Show, Radisson Hotel. Exit 34 off 495, SH: 10am-3pm, T: 65, A: $5. Larry's Wonderful World, PH: 978-459-5323.

MISSOURI

Dec 30 MO, Chesterfield. Comic Book Convention, Hampton Inn & Stes. 5 McBride & Son Ctr. Dr., SH: 10am-4pm, A: free. Alan, PH: 309-657-1599.

NEW YORK

Feb 23-25 NY, New York City. Comic-Con, Jacob Javits Ctr. A: $30.-$40. per day, $45.-$65. for weekend. Reed Exhibitions, PH: 888-605-6059.

OHIO

Jan 7 OH, Cleveland. Comic & Sci-Fi Con, Knight's Party Center. KOFC Hall, 29101 Euclid Ave. (.5 mi. E. of I-90 & Exit 186), SH: 10am-3pm, T: 35-8', F: $60., A: $2., 6 & under free. Jeff Harper, 5220 Loma Linda NE, Canton, OH 44714. PH: 330-499-6056.

Feb 4 OH, Mansfield. Toy Show, Richland Co. Fairgrounds. SH: 10am-4pm, T: 140-8', A: $2.50. Kevin Spore, PO Box 3603, Mansfield, OH 44907. PH: 419-756-3904.

Feb 11 OH, Akron-Canton. Comic Con, Tadmor Hall. 3000 Krebs Dr., I-77 exit 120 (Arlington Rd.) off Jarvis Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, T: 60-6', F: $80., A: $3., 6 & under free. Jeff Harper, 5220 Loma Linda NE, Canton, OH 44714. PH: 330-499-6056

Mar 4 OH, Columbus. Comic Con, Buckeye Hall of Fame Cafe. 1421 Olentangy River Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, T: 40-6', F: $70., A: $3., 6 & under free. Jeff Harper, 5220 Loma Linda NE, Canton. OH 44714. PH: 330-499-6056.

TEXAS

Dec 17 TX, Dallas. JMV Comic Book Show, Omni Hotel-Park West. 1590 LBJ Freeway (IH-635 at IH-35), SH: 10am-4pm, T: 25-6', F: $50., A: $2. JMV Entertainment, PO Box 151, Temple, TX 76503. PH: 254-760-8682.

Jan 13 TX, Live Oak-San Antonio. Eckman's Comic, Sports Card & Toy Show, Civic Center. Pat Booker Rd., IH-35 & Loop 1604, SH: 9am-5pm, T: 155, A: $3., 12 & under free. Dale Eckman, 8050 Pioneer Oak. Converse, TX 78109. PH: 210-945-0003.

Jan 21 TX, San Antonio. JMV Comic Book Show, Crowne Plaza Hotel. 1111 NE Loop 410 (exit Nacogdoches Rd.), SH: 10am-4pm, T: 25-6', F: $50., A: $2. JMV Entertainment, PO Box 151, Temple, TX 76503. PH: 254-760-8682.

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4035 Freelancers, For Hire
4040 Writers, For Hire
4041 Writers, Wanted
4050 Small Press, For Sale
4051 Small Press, Wanted

PERSONALS
4005 Personals

COMICS
4100 Archie, For Sale
4101 Archie, Wanted
4110 Black & White, For Sale
4111 Black & White, Wanted
4120 Classic, For Sale
4121 Classic, Wanted
4122 Comic Collections, For Sale
4123 Comic Collections, Wanted
4124 Comics Related, Employment
4125 Comics Shows/Events
4126 Comics Supplies
4128 Dark Horse, For Sale/Wanted
4130 DC, For Sale
4131 DC, Wanted
4140 Dell/Gold Key/Whitman, For Sale
4141 Dell/Gold Key/Whitman, Wanted
4150 Disney, For Sale
4151 Disney, Wanted
4156 Distributors
4160 EC, For Sale
4161 EC, Wanted
4170 Fawcett, For Sale
4171 Fawcett, Wanted
4180 Foreign, For Sale
4181 Foreign, Wanted
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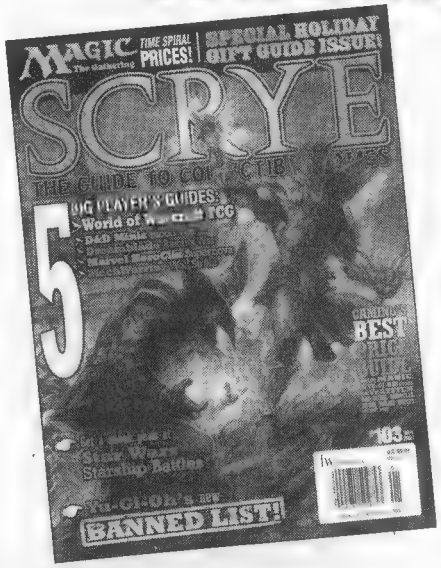

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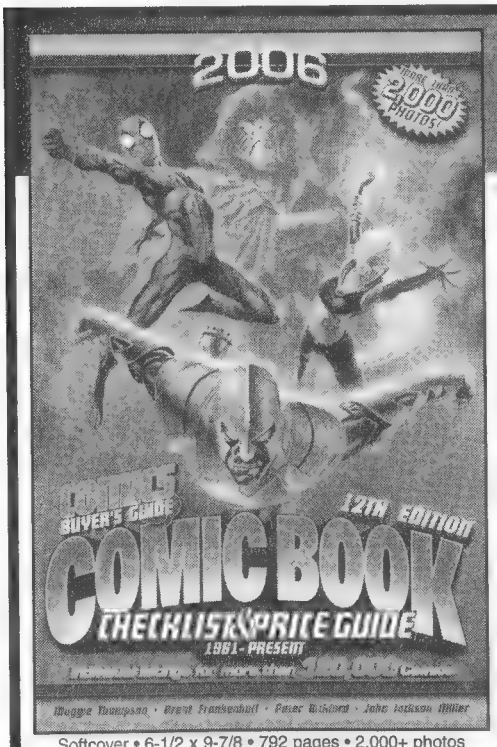

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Once I've accumulated my treasure ...

What do I do with it *now*?

by **MAGGIE THOMPSON**

You may be facing a storage problem that approaches menace.

As fans in the northern states experience a snowy winter every year, they come face-to-face with their collections. As the cold winds blow, it's an appropriate time to curl up with comics purchases from the preceding warmer weather — and figure out what the heck to do with all of it.

People who attended even a single comics convention in warmer months may now be looking at a strange assortment of oddly incompatible collectibles and trying to figure out how to organize it, store it, or display it. And the question arises at times: Do I need to have *all* the variant covers? *All* the statues of my favorite characters? Tapes of *all* the interviews Stan Lee has ever given?

And those wonderful pieces of art glommed from both kindly sketch artists and posters accumulated from publisher booths? Do I frame them *all*? Can I find an art file cheap? (Hah!)

Some portions of a collection are simple to store, if not to display.

The problem with collecting is that, sooner or later, you reach a point at which you begin to suspect that you may be facing a storage problem that approaches menace.

It may begin when you read one or another of the "how to become organized" texts that begin by declaring that (1) you need to eliminate clutter and that (2) old magazines and books are clutter. "You can always use your local public library," such advice may begin. "Many libraries today even have interlibrary loan systems that grant you access to statewide book-lending programs!" Such cautions may add that you can probably get any DVD you want in similar fashion. If the suggestions are recent enough, they'll even advise you to search online for what you want, rather than keep old documents, magazines, and/or books.

There used to be a comics shop called My Mom Threw Mine Away for once-young members of households that subscribed to such views decades ago. Those members, of course, were now sadly hunting for the precious icons of their youth. And today those people help keep auction houses, *www.bookfinder.com*, and back-issue shops in business, while they lurk on eBay in eternal hope.

The point is that much of what organizing books call "clutter" is what such folks as readers of ***CBG*** call "treasure." But, even when we recognize its precious nature, we may not be able to figure out how to *live* with it easily.

A collision of sobering moments

In late October, a couple of events coincided to bring such matters home to me. In the first case (otherwise a delight), my brother, Paul Curtis, moved from a New Jersey apartment to a small house next to my daughter, Valerie. While the move itself was backbreaking — even with the connivance of Valerie, her husband, Zander, and friends Brian Pearce and his wife, Kerry Kyle — the results are unalloyed wonderfulness.

[There's a hidden test here for longtime comics buffs: What's the comics connection of Paul Curtis? Of Brian Pearce? Ah, it's a small world.]

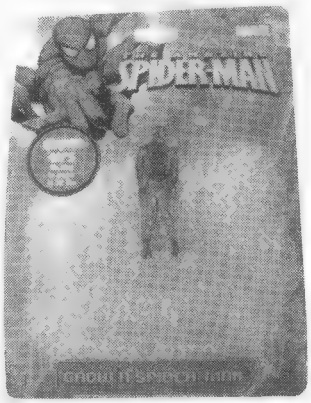
At any rate, such moves in our universe of collectors are more complex than such moves by people who have mere housefuls of furniture. Where in the new domicile, for example, should the Marvel Punisher and the McDonald's Batman mugs reside? In what fashion should the roll of uncut Marvel cards be displayed?

Later, as we cruised through the A&P looking for such necessities of life as milk, Coke products, paper bowls, and floor-cleaner, I discovered a dump (that's a technical term, y'all; it was a cardboard display case, not a pile of cast-offs) of Marvel Things. Now,

Brother Paul, daughter Valerie, grandson Devon, and son-in-law Zander express their varying reactions to the process of having finished moving a collection.

consider this: If you're a completist collector, you (a) need them all but then (b) need to figure out how to display them. Talk about the "Mint In Box" scenario! In the Silver days of comics collecting, some would buy one issue to read and one issue to pack away — and (if you were flush with cash) one Aurora model to store and one to put together. (In Paul's case, one to customize for Don and Maggie — in the case of the "Old Witch" model, which he turned into E.C.'s Old Witch, complete with a comic book rolled in one hand and a glow-in-the-dark "EC" logo painted on the surface of what boiled in her cauldron. But I digress. And, no, that's *not* Paul's comics connection.)

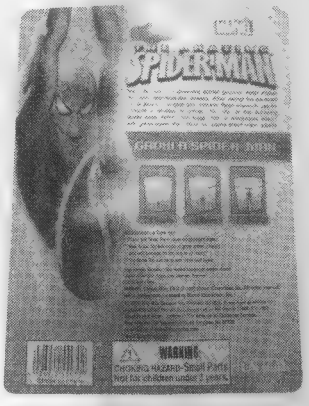
But *look* at this strange Marvel Thing. What *is* it? It's a — well — a "Grow a Spider-Man." OK then. Without ever saying exactly what else you're supposed to do with it, the instructions are to place it in room-temperature water, where it will begin to grow within two hours and (left in the water) become its full size (six times its 2-inch original) in three days.



Oh, and, "The Grow Toy can be grown again and again." Neat. Slightly more fun than watching grass grow, one assumes, but ...

First: It doesn't cost 12¢; it cost $2. Second: To achieve its purpose, it must be removed from the packaging and soaked in water. And what do you have then (aside from a drippy Spider-Man)? Are you supposed to play with it? How? In the bathtub?

Hey, at least Spidey won't be alone. There is a *slew* of such Marvel character "Grow Toys," so they can slosh around *together*, wet but ... bigger. But what does the collector *do* with them?



They may not have been made for collectors. They may have been made for kids to play with.

You know what? They may not have been made for collectors. They may have been made for kids to play with and fantasize over. Which is, come to think of it, what people used to think was the purpose of a comic book. Hmm.

Which brings me back to my point: What do you *do*, if you're a collector?

Art

We all yearn for art drawers, right?

At a Heritage auction a couple of years ago, I bought an original Gus Arriola *Gordo* daily (Arriola's work is terrific!) for something like a fifth the cost of having it framed. (Remember: Don't frame originals in cheesy discount-store frames; you've got to get UV-filtering glass for starters.)

And that was a daily strip; framing a comic-book page is more expensive.

So chances are you're going to end up with a stack (maybe small, maybe large) of original art that must be stored until those lottery numbers pay off for you.

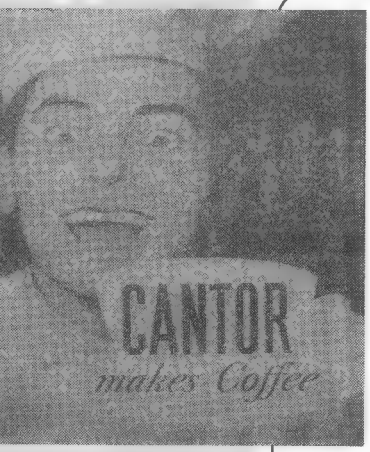
Where and how can you keep it?

Hey, at least ***CBG***'s George Hagenauer provides numerous hints on what to watch out for and tips about what to do. And inker Barb Kaalberg once tipped me off to the concept of storing art in artists' portfolios; you can find 'em in art supply stores, and they have pockets in which large art can reside. (I wouldn't keep art in them for the long term, though, unless backing paper in the portfolio is acid-free and the pockets are made of inert plastic.)

But what about huge posters? Time to check out the Bags Unlimited catalog again, I'm thinking ... *[Now pause for a digression.]*

Audio and video

Do you have Alan Light's vinyl lp record of some of the events at the 1976 San Diego Comic-Con? How about the Spider-Man record? Then what about audiotapes made long ago, both cassette and reel-to-reel? (Eventually, you know, the magnetized surface will disintegrate. There actually were advantages to shellac 78 rpm discs that were



This Eddie Cantor ad is on display at Geppi's Entertainment Museum.

The stills (and song lyrics) are from "Billboard Frolics."
© 1935 Warner Bros. Productions Corp. All rights reserved.

Merrie Cantor

Brian Gari, the son of Eddie Cantor's youngest daughter, Janet Gari, is a fixture with his mother at the Friends of Old Time Radio convention held annually in October in Newark, N.J.

John Dunning, in his classic reference work *Tune in Yesterday*, termed *The Eddie Cantor Show* "the biggest blockbuster of early radio," with Cantor (Jan. 31, 1892-Oct. 10, 1964) "the first of the great stars of vaudeville and burlesque to make it big in radio." He was a founder of the March of Dimes, the first president of the Screen Actors Guild, and had a career that spanned vaudeville, radio, and television eras. His radio ratings were the highest in the business, and such running gags as his five daughters, his "Banjo Eyes," and his Bronx cheer were internationally known. Characters from his radio show were similarly known, including Bert Gordon's "The Mad Russian," violinist David Rubinoff, Deanna Durbin, and Dinah Shore.

His fame was established by Jan. 27, 1936, when the *Merrie Melodies* cartoon "Billboard Frolics" was released, directed by I. (Friz) Freling. One of the billboards in the cartoon featured "Eddie Camphor" and "Russian violinist" "Rub-Em-Off." The two, voicing themselves, sang the new composition "Merrily We Roll Along," starting with Cantor:

> Merrily we roll along,
> Rub-Em-Off and me.
> When he plays his fiddle,
> I just go on a spree.
> It's a cinch that every time
> I go on the air,
> I just look around
> And find old Rub-Em-Off there.

And so it goes, with "Rub-Em-Off" chiming in and both completing the song together. You can see it as a bonus on the DVD of Errol Flynn's *Captain Blood*; the song was by Charles Tobias, Murray Mencher, and Cantor — and might have become as little-known as the cartoon that marked its introduction.

Except.

Except.

Except that, when it came time to select signature music for its later cartoons, the Warner Bros. Cartoon department picked two pieces of music. The first was 1937's "The Merry-Go-Round Broke Down" by Cliff Friend and Dave Franklin, adapted for Daffy Duck's performance in "Daffy Duck and Egghead" in 1938 and used as the primary theme of the *Looney Tunes* series.

As for the second ... The *Wikipedia* entry for "Merrily We Roll Along" attributes the

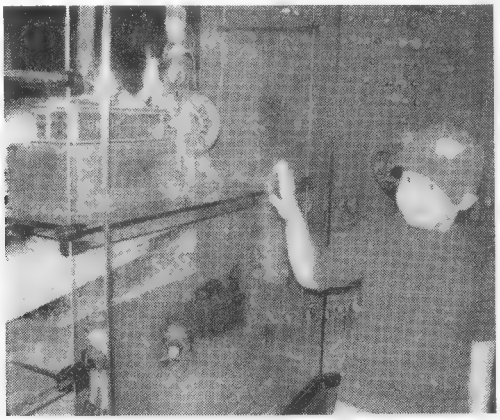
second theme to "an old folk tune," while acknowledging that only the first seven notes of the Warner Bros. *Merrie Melodies* are those of the traditional song that begins, "Merrily we roll along, roll along, roll along, Merrily we roll along o'er the deep blue sea." Actually (and as noted in Wikipedia's *Merrie Melodies* entry), the second theme — as used by Warner Bros. — is the one by Tobias, Mencher, and Cantor.

When I first met Brian Gari, I knew only what the general public knew about Eddie Cantor. Though I was familiar with the comic's appearance and gags, I'd had no idea of the authorship of the second cartoon theme. I was fascinated to learn that the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers, which protects its members' musical copyrights, had agreed to limit that protection in the case of the use of the Cantor music in Warner Bros. cartoons. Moreover, its origins are so little referred to that basic references on WB cartoons often neglect them. Every time I see Brian at the radio convention, I'd mean to do an article on the matter, which *is* alluded to on the *www.eddiecantor.com* website.

Go, too, to Brian's own website, *www.briangari.com*. I just picked up a copy of his book *We Bombed in New London: The Inside Story of the Broadway Musical* ($19.95, ISBN 1-59393-051-8), a bone-chilling (but funny) account of what can (and *did*) go wrong when you try to get a show on Broadway.

And take a look at "Billboard Frolics." Pick up the *Captain Blood* DVD (which is, after all, much fun on its own) and see for yourself.

Brian and Janet Gari at a Friends of Old Time Radio convention.



Grandson Jonah enjoys the way Steve Geppi stores collections. Steve displays them in a museum. Note the way Steve stored his marbles.

played with a thorn needle; the grooves wore down but still tend to play decades later.)

Hey, I'm just sayin'.

(By the way, have you ever dealt with an entire *opera* on 78 rpm records? *There's* a hobby I'm just as happy I'm not deeply involved in.)

Discs, discs, and more discs

Today's recording media tend to be handier, even if CDs look like MP3s look like photo files look like text discs look like computer programs. They're the same *size*, and that makes finding boxes handier. Bags Unlimited is one source of storage "utensil," and you can make do with others — just so's you can tell at a glance which disc holds what type o' stuff.

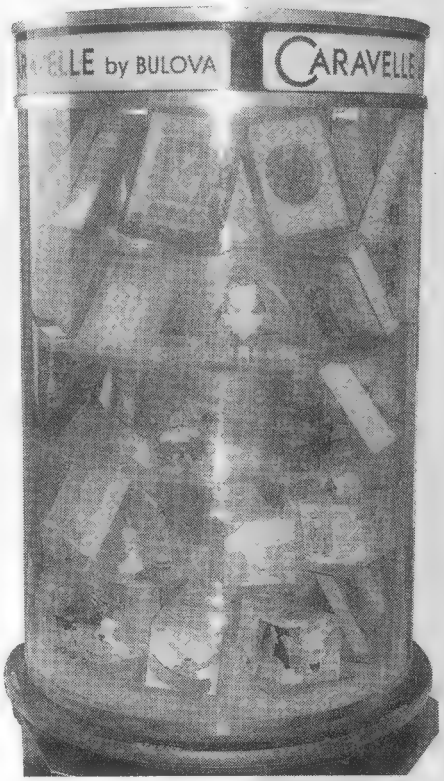
But that's *easy*!

What about all the *rest*?

Somewhere in my house, probably rolled in a scroll somewhere, is a poster from 1963 from the side of a London bus. It promotes the *new Evening Standard* newspaper strip by Peter O'Donnell and Jim Holdaway: *Modesty Blaise*. I think a very kind British science-fiction fan named Alan Dodd sent it to us at the time — and he continued to send us the clipped strips for years thereafter.

Clipped strips are easy enough to store; in fact, a slightly deep-drawer check-storage file will do the job in many cases. But a bus poster?

And the statues! When the John Romita-designed Marvel bisque statue of Spider-Man was released in 1991, we were elated. It had a cherished spot in our household. But how many mantels and bookcase tops do you have? On one of my bookcases, the Golden Age Captain America now stares wistfully at a Clayburn Moore 1997 Witchblade and the over-the-top Elektra sculpted by Alistair Coleman of Synapse. But there's little room for more there. And there are few other spots of safety for such works of art. My statue of Matt Wagner's Mage was knocked off a table years ago, and I haven't even had the heart to *begin* to look for a replacement. And so it goes.



Watch the watches! Brent stores dexterity puzzles and other small collectibles in an old Bulova watch display case.

If you use the lovely HeroClix figures as your mini-statue collection (as opposed to playing games with them), how do you store them? Display them?

Character watches? Is there a way to keep cheap battery-operated ones running?

Collector cards? Hide them in binders or hang them on the wall?

Pep comics buttons?

Come on, folks! Share your answers to the question "What do I do with it *now*?"

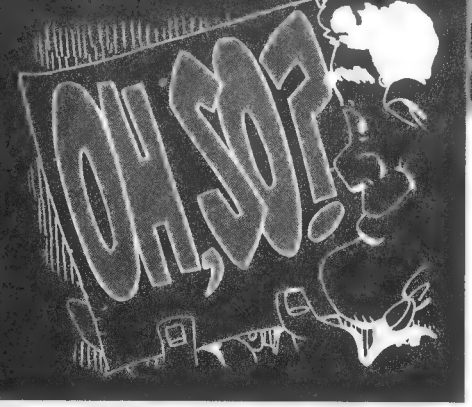
It's getting difficult to walk through the living room, what with the books, the papers, the boxes, the computer, the turntable, and general toys piled in an assortment of spots that seemed suitable at one point or another.

Clipped strips are easy enough to store.

But a bus poster?

Answer to the question on Page 176: Paul Curtis was an Innovation staffer and, later, a Marvel staffer before moving into his current activities in the wonder world of IT. And Brián has designed many, many projects for DC over the years.

MAGGIE THOMPSON had a fantastic time at the October Friends of Old Time Radio convention in Newark. Quoting the OTR Jane Ace line, "You could have knocked me over with a fender," when Anthony Tollin (left in this photo) announced I was this year's recipient of the Allen Rockford Award, given to people who make significant contributions to the OTR hobby. Such delights were followed by the ensuing days of lugging box after box after box after box of my brother's comics and books and games and DVDs and stuff and stuff and stuff the week after. Tell me how much fun you have figuring out how to handle what *you've* accumulated in your fannish life. Write me at 700 East State St., Iola, WI 54945, or *ohso@krause.com*. For that matter, pass on your *best* tips to our readers at *www.CBGXtra.com*!



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APOLOGIES

Gary Dunaier
*Via **CBGXtra.com***

Received my copy of ***CBG*** #1623 in yesterday's mail. I was glad to see that postings about collecting fanzines led off the letters column. The topic of collecting fanzines is not only interesting but also well worth further study. However, I *wasn't* so happy to see that my online comments about being the successful high bidder on a run of old *Nostalgia Journals* were tacked onto the end of Dana Gabbard's letter (page 181).

I'm sure Dana was also surprised to find out he's suddenly the owner of *Nostalgia Journals* #18-31. (Unless, of course, Dana actually *does* own a run of *The Nostalgia Journal* that includes #18-31.)

On another topic: The Virtual Stamp Club is reporting that the Marvel stamps will be issued at next year's Comic-Con International: San Diego. Apparently, the U.S. Postal Service made so much money in San Diego when it issued the DC stamps at this year's Comic-Con that it decided to go back in hopes of a repeat performance.

At its very core, a postage stamp is just a receipt for pre-payment of postal service; it's in the USPS' best interests to create stamps people are going to want to save and not use, because sales to collectors represent pure profit.

Ray: *My apologies to both you and Dana. The error was my fault.*

KEEP YOUR *CBG*s

Paul Dale Roberts
5606 Moonlight Way
Elk Grove, CA 95758

Regarding ***CBG*** #1623:

A quick answer to Jörg Winner in your letters page (***CBG*** #1623, page 180): The answer is, "Yes." ***Comic Buyer's Guide*** is worth keeping. I would place ***CBG*** right up there with collecting *National Geographics*. Each and every issue of ***CBG*** is filled with historical information on comics. A comic-book historian would have a field day with back issues of ***CBG***.

I have every ***CBG*** in my home wrapped in plastic. I would never dream of parting with my collection. Also, ***CBG*** has long lost its category as a fanzine; it's truly a magazine — and a recognized magazine to boot. 'Nuff said.

THE NAME IS BOND

Nelson Jimenez

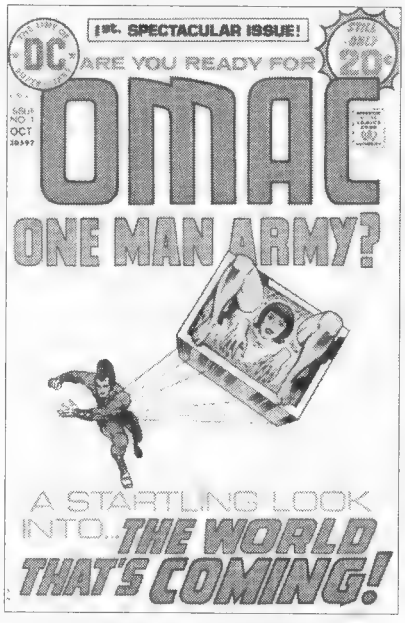
I'm looking forward to the upcoming movies featuring Ghost Rider, James Bond, and the one just out about George Reeves (*Hollywoodland*). But what happened to the *Aquaman* show from the producers of *Smallville*? I heard that was canceled even before the pilot aired. The character never gets respect.

I consider Arthur Curry the Rodney Dangerfield of comics. His best eras were during the Jim Aparo run of the '70s and the Peter David series in the '90s.

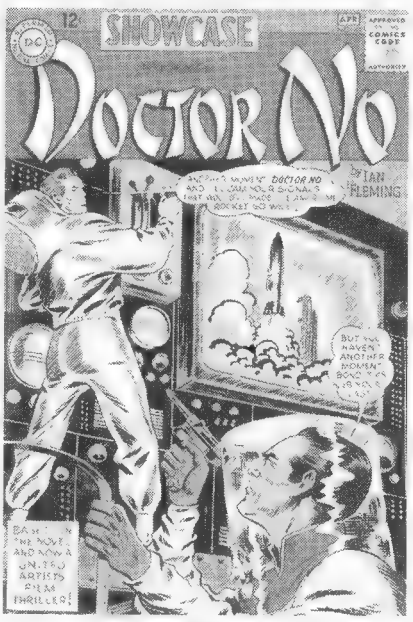
The Marvel *Essentials* paperbacks are great — Luke Cage and Howard the Duck were awesome. I'm hoping to see editions devoted to *Blade*, including his team-ups with Spidey and battles with Morbius; *Eternals* — King Kirby; and *FOOM* (why not?).

As for DC's *Showcase* paperbacks, how about *OMAC*? What other character has had the following creators: Kirby, Kubert, Starlin, Perez, and Byrne? The trade should include all his appearances in his solo series, team-ups, and backup stories, since there weren't that many. Also would like to see an all-Ditko edition featuring Creeper, Shade, Hawk and Dove, The Question, *etc.*

I was also wondering who owns the comics rights to James Bond. I would love to someday see an archive edition of his various comics series — maybe even the newspaper strip, as well. The issue I most want to read is the DC *Showcase* issue



***How about* OMAC?**



Or* Showcase *#43?

CBG XTRA ONLINE BONUS! Don't wait to share your opinion! Log in now at www.cbgxtra.com, visit the Oh, So forum, and post now!

adapting *Dr. No*. I know Marvel, Dark Horse, Eclipse, and DC published the character, but weren't there others? I expect the character to be popular again with the new Bond, Daniel Craig, in *Casino Royale*.

Maggie: *That was it for U.S. comics publishers, as far as I know. The* ***Daily Express*** *strips in England, begun with artist John McLusky, have been most easily seen in reprint form from Titan Books*

Brent: *Topps adapted* ***Goldeneye****. Tim Lasiuta reviewed Titan's* ***Casino Royale*** *collection in* ***CBG*** *#1606.*

GIVE FLEA MARKETS A CHANCE

Jim Bahler
404 N. Washington St.
Janesville, WI 53548

Twice in recent months, you've warned **CBG** readers to stay away from comics at flea markets, and I suspect there are at least two reasons why you're so opposed to them. Perhaps I'm wrong, but my first suspicion is that you are simply being loyal to your advertisers, who are primarily shop owners and manufacturers of comics and don't want bottom-feeders like me to exist. I'm guessing that the second reason is that you haven't attended many Wisconsin flea markets in the last 10 years or so. If the latter is the case, I hope you'll have the opportunity to reexamine the markets next summer.

I opened my first comics shop inside a video store in 1990 and was in as many as three locations during the '90s, finally throwing in the retail store towel in 2002 but continuing with the flea markets I'd entered in 1994.

Granted, the comics market has changed drastically in the past decade, but so have flea markets. Where there were half a dozen or so serious comic-book sellers at flea markets in the mid-'90s, now there are perhaps one or two.

I'm doing many more flea markets now than I was 10 years ago. In fact, I'm currently setting up at flea markets every weekend of the year. Granted, I'm in an indoor market here in Janesville from the beginning of November until early April, but I'm on the road every weekend for nearly seven months of the year, with at least 90% of the markets here in Wisconsin — which is your stomping ground, too, Maggie.

But I didn't see you at the Columbus Speedway market in April or the Mukwonago monthly market in June, July, August, or September. Nor did I see you at Prairie du Chien's Rendezvous Days in mid-June or Hatfield's (near Black River Falls) flea markets on Memorial Day and Independence Day weekends. I didn't see you at Gays Mills Applefest last weekend or the Jefferson Speedway Sunday morning markets or at Shopiere, Elkhorn's Summer Festival, or at Delavan's Sidewalk Sale and Flea Market.

But I was there, with seven longboxes of comics selling for $1 each, 12 for $10, all bagged, boarded, and in alpha-numeric order, including recent Spider-Man, Superman, Batman, and Hulk titles and a box of Archies and manga. The vast majority is in newsstand Mint condition. Yes, bags get frayed — during the winter, I replace the damaged bags.

I also put out for sale eight boxes of higher-priced comics, all strictly graded, mostly lower-grade reading copies and also all alpha-numeric. I discount those, based on quantity purchased, usually between 10% and 50%. I sell a lot of Dell comics for $2-$5. I also have a box of graphic novels for sale at 50% off retail.

As for other retailers, I'm only aware of one serious seller at the markets I attend. He bags all his comics and puts out only what's hot. If there's a new Spider-Man, X-Men, or Superman movie, he brings out a few hundred of those issues. They're in Fine to Near Mint condition, and he sells them for 25¢ to 50¢ each, not Near Mint *Guide*.

As for the other vendors who turn up with five to 50 miscellaneous comics, there are, to be sure, some at almost every show. I guess some of them may try to sell ragged comics at Mint prices. But I bought two comics at Gays Mills from one of those flea-market people last weekend: a very rough *Sparkling Stars* #18 (Holyoke 1946) and *Li'l Jinx* #16 (Archie 1957, last issue). According to *Overstreet*, the former is worth $8 in Good (this is in Poor) and the latter is priced at $10 in Good (I'd say this is closer to Very Good). They were bagged and priced at two for $5. He had other unusual titles, too, at this price. Like me, he wasn't selling Good condition comics at NM prices.

As best we can, those of us who are serious about selling at outdoor markets do our best to keep our products out of the sun, rain, and dust. We try to put comics under tents or canopies and we put tarps over them to keep out rain and dew at night.

It is not possible to publish all letters received, and we cannot reply to letters that we don't print. Letters submitted to *Oh, So?* for publication become the property of F+W Publications. Letters will be edited and may be cut due to length and other considerations. If any of your message — including your address — is *not* for publication, please indicate that in your message.

Maggie, most of us who are still selling comics at flea markets are serious about what we're doing and we're concerned about the condition and price at which we're selling comics. I hope that next spring, summer, or fall you'll have the opportunity to visit some of today's Wisconsin flea markets and, hopefully, that what you'll see will pleasantly surprise you. When I have my tentative schedule for 2007 ready, I'll send a copy to you.

Maggie: *Hey, Jim! You're right; you didn't see me at those events because I gave up on flea-market comics long ago — and I haven't had time to check out most flea markets for other stuff in the last couple of years. Has absolutely* ***nothing*** *to do with supporting our advertisers; has to do with warning the newbie that he or she will probably do better at, say, a mall event than at an outdoor anything-goes-price-'em-at-NM-no-matter-what flea market.*

I've been meaning to get back to the Princeton Saturday flea market, which I enjoy, but I suddenly realize that I haven't even gone ***there*** *since Don died. Not a boycott; just that my Saturdays have been almost completely bound up in family affairs or conventions or* ***CBG*** *(or even getting my house clean) for quite some time.*

When I ***do*** *see a flea market, the comics are still baking in the sun and the prices are still high. But you've had* ***far*** *more experience than I in this regard, and I'm delighted you're seeing a change.*

Brent: *And I* ***have*** *made a point of going to flea markets and antique stores. While I'm still seeing some dealers with "highest price is the price to ask" attitudes, I have found bargains, as well. The "investors" of the '90s have disappeared for the most part. It is, indeed, possible to find 25¢ and 50¢ boxes of comics*

from that era these days. Cover price is still attempted for some of the '90s heavily overprinted comics, and, if I need to fill a hole, I'll pay it. I'm much more excited to find '60s and '70s comics for $1 or $2 apiece.

That said, there are still general auctioneers who have no clue how to handle a large group of comics. At one sale, they had advertised Marvel's ***Star Wars Annual*** *#1 (Dec 79) as "Star Wars 1st Edition." It was amusing watching potential buyers come in, see the annual and other comics offered, and quickly leave. I patiently waited four hours and picked up groups of late '70s Marvel and DCs (including some Whitman reprints) for about 30¢ each.*

Another recent auction netted some mid-grade 1950s comics for between $6 and $11 each during the "buyer's choice" portion of the sale before moving to the groups where I was picking up comics for $1 each.

SELLING

Mike Bromberg

In a recent column (*Tales from the Database*, #1622, page 164), Chuck Rozanski of Mile High Comics bemoaned the fact that, due to competition from the Internet and a local discount store, he would need to lower his prices.

Before we all get too upset, let's look at some of Mile High's prices. Pulling an old issue of ***Comics Buyer's Guide*** at random, in Rozanski's column in #1609 (page 205), he mentions having sold the following comics (all unslabbed):

• *Avengers* #4 in Fair: $240 — This is four times *Overstreet* value for Fair, and ***CBG***'s guide is generally less than Overstreet's, so who knows how many multiples of the ***CBG*** value it is?

• *Amazing Spider-Man* #122 in Very Good: $200 — This is five times the *Overstreet* value for VG. ***CBG***'s guide?

• *Amazing Spider-Man* #27 in Fine: $291 — ***CBG*** had this one at $500 in Near Mint, and it's almost three times the *Overstreet* value for Fine.

These comics are not rare, especially in low grades. Rozanski listed more similarly priced comics in his column — many selling for two times *Guide* or more — and had more examples of such prices month after month. I remember reading his sale list in each ***CBG*** and just not understanding how this was happening. And then he stopped listing his sale prices in ***CBG***.

Now, let's look back to the *Ultimate Spider-Man* #1 reprint from Free Comic Book Day a couple of years back — y'know, that promo to bring new readers into the comics fold. Let's peruse what these new readers might see in the full-page Mile High Comics ad:

• *Daredevil* #1 in Good: $750 "Sold"

• *Fantastic Four* #1 in Fair: $2,500 "Sold"

• *Fantastic Four* #48 in Fine: $1,300

• *Captain America* #100 in Fine: $500

I'm sorry — let me read that again — it must have been an error. *Fantastic Four* #1 in Fair selling for $2,500? To whom? Who would possibly pay that? As a comparison, a CGC 5.0 VG/F copy sold on eBay this month for $2,593. Slabbed, unlike Mile High's copy in Fair 1.0.

And now we're supposed to be sad that Rozanski has competition and has to lower his prices. C'mon.

Maggie: *Chuck has occasionally discussed his pricing in the past, and you're right that it is at variance with many price guides. What needs to be kept in mind is that his set-up is also at variance with that of virtually any other seller: He focuses on stocking, as much as possible, every comic book published. In order to make the in-depth variety available, his structure of pricing and stocking is adjusted. He was getting, for example, what many would consider outrageous prices for Marvel's* ***Strawberry Shortcake*** *— which few comics buffs would regard as a "must-have" title. But he wasn't selling that title to comics buffs, but to Strawberry Shortcake collectors.*

And so it goes.

He adjusts up and down, taking demand into consideration — and he lists copies in varying conditions.

SHORTBOXES VS. LONGBOXES

Lee Houston Jr.

Via ***CBGXtra.com***

I agree that there are not as many minor shows as there used to be, and any business has to be successful to survive, but I seriously doubt shows and comic-book stores will become a thing of the past.

There are just some things that the Internet will never be able to replace, like meeting your favorite creators in person, getting their autographs, and holding a new comic book in your hands. However, it's always been my understanding that on New Comics Day (Wednesdays), most stores prefer their customers to wait until that afternoon or evening before coming in, to give the employees a chance to check in and merchandise the new arrivals.

I always try to make it on Thursdays, depending upon weather, the calendar, and transportation availability.

My review of ***CBG*** #1624, thus far:

• Not too crazy about Marvel going back to the Heroes Reborn universe, probably because I was never thrilled about the original storyline to begin with. Do you really *need* a major company-wide event and all the other hoopla just to change creative teams on a few titles?

• If I ever make it to Baltimore, I definitely plan to stop at Geppi's Entertainment Museum.

Overall, it's another great issue that lives up to the excellent standards of ***CBG*** and its staff. Kudos to everyone involved.

I prefer the shortboxes to the long. They may not hold as much, but they are easier to store and definitely easier to lift. Unfortunately, most of my boxes are just in reading order — as in: I read this before that, then came this one, *etc.* — because they are sitting in a storage facility awaiting the day when I can keep everything under one roof that I can call my own. There are drawbacks to living in an apartment.

When that day does come, I have a *lot* of work ahead of me. Haven't decided on first-to-current or current-to-first numerically yet, but I agree with sorting alphabetically by title. Keeping your collection separate by publisher is no longer feasible, in my opinion, because of all the publisher crossovers.

I recommend investing in window pockets, such as what shippers use for packing lists and invoices. That way, you can put one on the front of each box and just change the card to reflect the contents, especially on boxes containing long-established titles such as *Action Comics*, *Amazing Spider-Man*, *etc.* But always keep a dividing board at the beginning and end of each box so, even after your comics are bagged, they are not exposed to harsh light getting through the box handles.

Brent: *Just so you hear it from another* ***CBG*** *staff member than Maggie (the "Mom" of our group), shortboxes are definitely the way to go to save on back strain, potential hernias,* ***etc.*** *However, it's still possible to strain a shoulder or your back, if you handle too many in any one session. My chiropractor loves it when I'm in the midst of filing time.*

My own preference is to file strictly by title with the lowest numbered issue coming first and then going up from there to the back of the box. Annuals and specials are at the end of the respective run.

The only exceptions I make are when a long-running title has a title change in the middle of the run, but it's not clear where it occurs — the cover didn't change, for example. ***Thor*** *and* ***Mighty Thor*** *are good examples, as I now have them all under* ***Thor.***

I'll second your suggestion about the adhesive pockets on the end of the boxes. Bags Unlimited offers several sizes, and I've been using the business-card-sized ones for years. I have a simple template in my computer at home, where I can plug in whatever information I want —often just the box number — and then print a sheet of new labels to slip in the respective pockets. It lets me insert a fresh box into the group as I interfile every few months.

For magazines and other materials, I print a simple descriptor of what's in the box — ***Treasure Chest****, Golden Age, Marvel mags,* ***CBGs, etc.*** *— on the label.*

My collection rotates within each box often enough (and they're stored in a dark corner of my basement) that I don't worry all that much about fading.

If I didn't do it this way, I'd never be able to turn up the items I need to illustrate many of the columns in each month's issue of ***CBG****. As the columnists will attest, I do have to call on them from time to time to help me out with a scan or two.*

Good luck with organizing to those of you who have a monumental job ahead of you.

HE ALREADY HAS A HERNIA

Earl Green
Via ***CBGXtra.com***

I still use the longboxes, because they hold more. I don't worry about a hernia because I already have one, so they tell me, as a result of the surgery. It doesn't hurt or anything. I don't know if it's supposed to or even what it is or what causes it. It just doesn't look natural, but it doesn't hurt me at all.

By the way, I'm currently watching the Sunday night Fox sitcom *The War at Home*. The two kids dragged the dad to a comic-book convention. No mention of if it's San Diego, but they saw Zoltar there signing autographs. Who is Zoltar? Wasn't he from Flash Gordon? Hey, Zoltar just showed up and mentioned the "San Diego Bloody Chicken." Seems Zoltar used to do Shakespeare. (The English or the Klingon?)

I have most of my boxes (the long ones) on an old kitchen table in the basement. They are off the floor. I remember Abby telling me years ago she lost most of her collection in a flood, I think in the house she still lives in here in Cleveland Heights. Good old Abby, you'd know her house anywhere. I really need to talk to her about getting her back online. I know she has a computer. Man, if I could get her back online and turn her on to ***CBGXtra.com***, she'd be hooked. I'm pretty sure she still loves comic books, too.

Just received ***CBG*** #1623 and noticed — How could I *not* have noticed? — the five-page preview of *Rakan*. Here is a new title I've never heard of.

Is this preview here because I'd asked John Jackson Miller about returning the preview feature to the pages of ***CBG***? I sure hope so. If it is, hey guys, thanks a lot. Now if we could just make a steady monthly feature, as it used to be.

On a different topic: I have a *Calvin & Hobbes* thingy on my Google homepage. So I clicked on it today and it's a classic Sunday strip. So I'm looking at a side link on the Ucomics page that posts the daily (and Sunday) comics and found a side link that enables you to create your own comics page. Choose from 150 strips. Now for the bad news: It costs to the tune of $11.95 a year. Rats, I knew it was too good to be true.

More thoughts on *Superman Returns*:

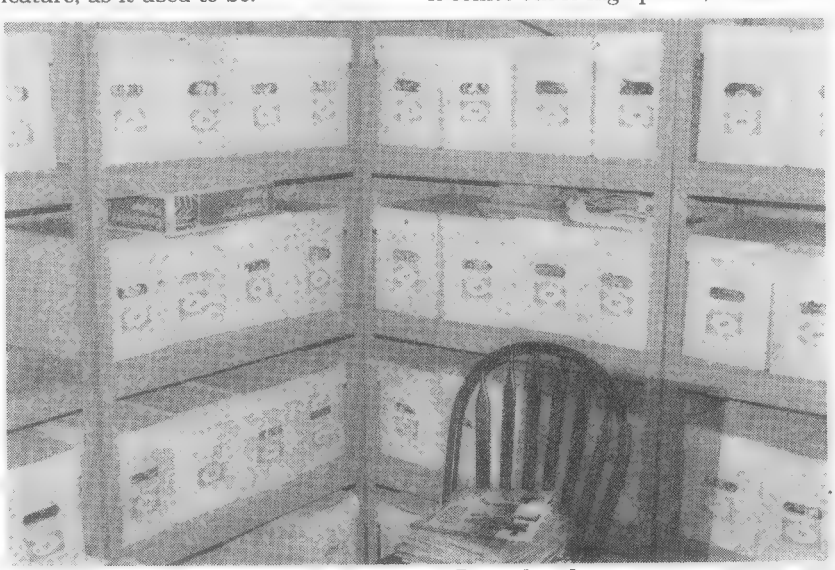
OK, I just saw it again last night at Loewman's Cinemark, my local cheapie theatre; admission is only $1.75. This was my second time seeing it. I saw it with two friends who had not seen it yet. Friend #1 saw Noel Neill's name in the opening credits and pointed it out to me. "Not for long," says I. Friend #1 also recognized Jack Larson.

It's amazing how much of it I had forgotten since the first time I saw it, when it first came out.

Friend #1 asked me who was going to get the plane out of the stadium, two seconds before Perry White asked it. *That* shut her up.

The bank Luthor and friends broke into was Newhart Federal Bank. Was that a Singer nod to Bob Newhart, creator of *Mad Dog*? (Yes, I know he didn't create *Mad Dog*.) The piano was a Steinway and Sons. Nothing but the best for Luthor, huh?

Friend #2 is really a lover of horror movies but, after it was over, he said he really enjoyed it and it was good — that he plans to buy it on DVD when it comes out is high praise, indeed.



Boxes, boxes, boxes — Brent has boxes.

I asked Friend #1 at the end of the movie if Supes was a deadbeat dad, as the general feeling here is, after I explained it to her. She said no, that was ridiculous. How could he be a deadbeat dad when he didn't know that Lois had had a baby? That's stupid, she said.

So that's the final word on whether Supes is a deadbeat dad. He's *not*. End of that discussion.

I will, of course, buy the movie when it comes out on DVD. But it bugs me that Bryan Singer is so young. What gives him the authority to do the directing? How old *is* he, 18? 19? He better not screw up the next installment.

Ray: *Zoltar was the super-villain in the '70s anime television show* ***Battle of the Planets.***

As for Ucomics, $1 per month isn't too harsh. And for those wondering, the Ucomics website is located at ***www.ucomics.com.***

As for Bryan Singer, he's 41. No joke. And he's had mucho critical acclaim since the mid-'90s directing such films as ***The Usual Suspects****,* ***Apt Pupil****, and, of course, the first two* ***X-Men*** *films.*

Brent: *If you've noticed, in recent months, we've had previews of* ***Wolverine: Origins****,* ***Claw the Unconquered****,* ***Liberty Girl****, and, most recently,* ***Rakan.*** *We're working on an ongoing preview feature, so keep reading.*

Maggie: *Just to digress:* ***Don't*** *ignore a hernia. No, it won't necessarily hurt — but it* ***can*** *kill you, if it gets strangulated. And that can happen, if you're throwing longboxes around without providing proper support for that hernia. Geez!*

A hernia is a torn muscle, through which a portion of your intestine is protruding. If you tear it more — say, by lifting a longbox in a way that increases the tear — it can Do Bad Things. Bad Things includes snapping around the intestine portion, cutting off blood flow, and killing that portion of …

Heck, do check with your doctor, please. We want to keep you with us!

COMICBASE ORDER

Adam Sternberg
Via ***CBGXtra.com***

Since I use *ComicBase* extensively, I tend to sort my books in the order *ComicBase* provides in the inventory report. It makes for easy cross-referencing. There are some exceptions, mostly when titles change, because, in my mind, it doesn't make a lot of sense to break them up. Those are few and far between, however.

As far as boxes go, while I am concerned about weight and such, DrawerBoxes only come in one size, and I use those in order to make things easier to pull out and stack higher. What I'd love to see is something like a computer cart that can be raised or lowered to be even with the box, which could then slide right out onto the cart. Then there'd be *no* lifting.

Brent: *The idea is to assemble and stack DrawerBoxes where you want them — and* ***then*** *fill them. That way, you don't have to move them again — or* ***filled*** *ones* ***at all.***

LABELLING WITH COMICS

Matt Levin
Via ***CBGXtra.com***

I use shortboxes, sequentially, #1 back to newest number within a title — and, heh, by genre. We got us 60-plus shortboxes here, so I won't go through all of them, just sort of give ya an idea how it goeth:

Each box bears a Mylarized comic book indicative of the box's contents, *e.g.* …

Usagi Yojimbo heralds one of several boxes of manga. *Ronin* and *Sanctuary* head two other such. *Jonah Hex* adorns one of two boxes of Westerns. *Ms. Tree* marks one of several boxes of mystery and detective comics. *House of Mystery*, however, covers one of three boxes of monster comics: *Man-Thing*, *Swamp Thing*, and *The Thing*. There's *Jungle Action* with *Conan*, *Sonja*, *Tarzan*, and *Salimba* (among others) and the Bat fellow on two boxes of Batbooks. (*Detective*, however, is in with, well, detectives.)

Of course, there're several boxes of super-heroes: *Daredevil* on a boxful of DD; *The Masked Man* on a box of individual heroes; *Power Man & Iron Fist* on a box of teamed-up heroes. *The X-Men* and The Liberty Legion both mark boxes of super-hero teams. Spidey has his own box

FOR ART'S SAKE

by Chris Smigliano

I'VE BEEN READING THESE NEW COMPILATIONS OF SILVER-AGE SUPERMAN STORIES. AND FOR THE LIFE OF ME, I CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHAT SUPERMAN EVEN SEES IN LOIS LANE!! TO ME, SHE COMES ACROSS AS LITTLE MORE THAN A CONNIVING FRUMP!!
WELL, YOU HAVE TO CONSIDER THE STANDARDS OF THOSE DAYS... PERSONALLY, I'VE ALWAYS LOOKED AT THE STORIES AS KIND OF AN ALTERNATE VERSION OF "I LOVE LUCY!"
-KRYPTONITE IN MY BONGOS? LOOIS, YOU GOTTA LOTTA 'SPLAININ' TO DO!!
WWAAAH!!
THAT'S A BIT FAR, DON'T YOU THINK, MAN? AND BESIDES, HOW DO YOU FIT IN FRED AND ETHEL?
WELL, PERRY WHITE CAN BE FRED, AND JIMMY OLSEN AS ETHEL.. WELL.. IT WOULDN'T BE THE WEIRDEST CHANGE HE'D GONE THRU...
©2006

FULL FRONTAL NERDITY by Aaron Williams

OKAY, LET'S GO KICK SOME VILLAIN BUTT!
THAT'S NOT OUR WAY, POWER GIRL. WE'RE THE JUSTICE SOCIETY OF AMERICA, AFTER ALL.
WHAT?
YOU WANT BARBARIC FISTICUFFS, GO FIND A LEAGUE OR A LEGION. A SOCIETY GATHERS TO WORK OUT SOLUTIONS OVER TEA.
BUT "OF AMERICA" MEANS WE BUST IN AND BREAK STUFF!
AND HOW WELL HAS THAT WORKED, LATELY? FEEL FREE TO TABLE A MOTION DURING THIS EVENING'S MEETING WITH THE AMBASSADOR TO KAHNDAQ.
THAT IS NOT WHAT THE NEW JSA WILL BE LIKE.
I'M JUST SAYIN' THE NAME IS LAME.
HE'S GOT A POINT.
DON'T LET THE JUSTICE QUILTING CLUB HEAR YOU SAY THAT.

with "The Kid Who Collects Spider-Man" on the end. There're two boxes of women heroes not fitting other box-genres. *Star Hunters* and *Captain Marvel* and "War of the Worlds" (Killraven) on boxes of science fiction. *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* covers one of a couple of boxes with *Hellblazer*, *etc. I, Vampire* heralds *Tomb of Dracula* and other bloodsuckers.

Jon Sable marks a boxful of adventurers, *Jonny Quest* and *Crash Ryan* among them. Mickey and Donald have a box of Disneys; *Groo* and *The Simpsons*, two boxes of intentionally funny comics, such as *Dr. Radium* and *Plop!* Oh, there's a dinosaur box of *Godzilla* and *Tales of the Paleozoic* and *Xenozoic Tales* and *Age of Reptiles* and such. A box of history comics, *Robin Hood*, and others.

Cerebus overflows into two boxes. A box or two of magazine-sized comics, *Eerie* and *Creepy*, *Vampirella*, *Epic Illustrated*, and that-there-sized stuff. There're more, I think, but ya get the idea, I bet.

Now, the books — there's science fiction and regular fiction and poetry and a section of film screenplays and one of theatrical plays, lots of books on religions and psychology — my college majors — and a bunch of childhood books. In our house proper are the detective novels, romance novels, graphic novels, and non-fiction. But, then, y'didn't ask about that, didja?

So, OK, heh-heh: by genre, sequentially #1 to newest. And a stack of index cards marking what's in what box. (Sigh — as of *last* summer ... must-up-date-in-for-ma-tion.)

STORING COMICS

Bill Gatevackes
Via ***CBGXtra.com***

Here is how I store my comics:

- I store them in numerical order, with #2 behind #1 and so on. Annuals are behind the main series. I keep each series in chronological order (*e.g.*, the '70s *Marvel Team-Up* before the '90s one, *etc.*)
- I usually have two books per bag and board. I do this because I have a whole lot of books. I am in the process of putting all my older and most valuable comics in individual Mylar bags with full backer boards. Hopefully, one day, I'll have *all* my books in these.
- Most of my books are in shortboxes, which I agree are definitely better than longboxes. However, I have started using DrawerBoxes. These make the books easier to get to, because I don't have to move three shortboxes to get to a book I want.
- All my books are in a spare room of our condo. Since some of my books face a big window, I also put a backboard in the front of the box to protect from fading.
- I use delivery-invoice adhesive envelopes and put them on the front of each box. You can find these at any Office Max, Office Depot, or Staples. I put index cards in these envelopes with what comics are in each box.
- I have my comics divided into four categories: complete series, complete sets; complete series, incomplete sets; ongoing series, incomplete sets; ongoing series, complete sets.

I have tried other ways but I thought they were too much for my feeble mind.

By the way, In recent years, Stan Lee has admitted that his "writing style" amounted to discussing the plot with the artist. I think this style was different with each artist. With Jack Kirby, he gave him a shoestring plot and let him go. It was rumored that Kirby came up with most of the idea for The Silver Surfer on his own, for instance.

However, Lee seemed a little more hands-on with Steve Ditko. I remember reading somewhere, perhaps in ***CBG***, that he and Ditko disagreed on who The Green Goblin should have been under the mask. Ditko wanted an unknown. Lee wanted Norman Osborn. We know who won that battle.

This is how I understand it from what I've read.

ARACHNO-ARCHAEOLOGY

Richard M. Brown
2326 Cabot
Detroit, MI 48209

Regarding *Amazing Spider-Man* #1 vs. *Amazing Fantasy* #15 in arachno-archaeology, obviously, *Amazing Fantasy* #15 is rarer. How do I know this?

- Personal knowledge — I've owned five of *ASM* #1 and only two of *AF* #15. With many, many years of conventions and ads, I know *AF* #15 is scarcer.
- Name recognition — The Fantastic Four (with Spider-Man) were on the cover of *ASM* #1. How would anyone know Spider-Man from Adam when he first appeared?
- Lagging sales — Stan Lee even said *AF* #15 wasn't selling.

As far as comic-book movies enhancing sales goes, it brings back

those of us who have liked the characters for a long time.

Superman Begins complicates matters. Superman and Lois Lane have a son. I have a theory. Being half-human, Lois' son would probably only have half Superman's powers. (As under an orange sun — exactly half.) *Smallville* and ***CBG*** have wondered if Superman and Lois could conceive. Since Superman and Lois procreated in the Fortress when he cached his super-powers, this could mean a severe lack of power in the offspring. The fact that the movie was set after *Superman 2* left questions as to paternity. On *Smallville*, a depowered Clark had a sexual relationship with Lana, broaching similar areas. *Superman Returns* was excellent. Four stars (and one asteroid and Krypton).

By the way, it occurred to me that Superman rebuilt Krypton. (When he shoved Lex's kryptonite structure into space; it is deadly but resembles Krypton.) And Superman's son means Earth has at least two people with Kryptonian blood.

I've worked on a list of stars who appeared in both a DC and a Marvel super-epic:

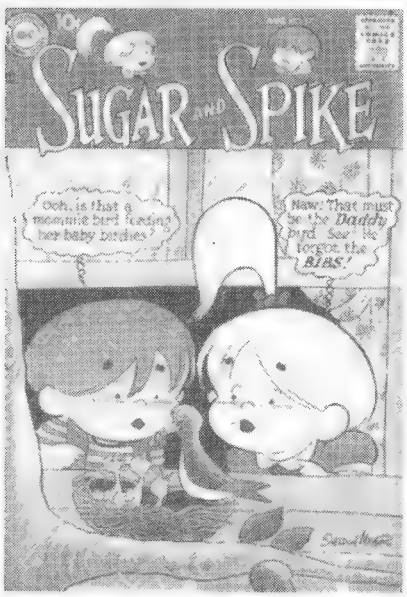
- Cliff Robertson — Uncle Ben in *Spider-Man*, the villain Shame on the *Batman* television show.
- Halle Berry — Storm of *X-Men*, Catwoman in the DC movie of that name.
- Shawn Ashmore — Eric on *Smallville*, Iceman in the *X-Men* movies.
- James Marsden — Cyclops in *X-Men*, Lois Lane's current boyfriend in *Superman Returns*.
- Terrence Stamp — General Zod in *Superman 2*, Stick in *Elektra*.

How about a *Sugar & Spike* issue in ***CBG***? I never read them, but too many top collectors enjoyed them. Maybe DC can be influenced to do a reprint in *Archive* form. Also, *Sugar & Spike* came out pre-*Showcase* #4. Is *Sugar & Spike* a Golden Age invention?

***Maggie: Sugar & Spike** #1 was dated May 1956, created by editor-writer-artist Sheldon Mayer.*

*It has been repeatedly argued that comics-shop sales won't support a **Sugar & Spike Archives** edition, which is probably bang-on.*

*Which is why it'd be great to see The Toddler Two in a format aimed at young readers. My thought has been black-and-white reprints marketed with the Duo Dynamic of comic-book **and** coloring-book sales.*



A book collection could serve a dual purpose.

AVOID KNEE-JERK PROTECTION

Michael Tierney
*Via **CBGXtra.com***

About the Jesus Castillo conviction in Texas: The defense, funded by the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund, did, indeed, present a very strong defense. I read or heard somewhere that someone who was in attendance stated that maybe the defense was *too* strong, and that after a week of hearing about comics as art and comics as literature, the jury was just ready to get things over with.

One thing I always want to point out whenever discussing my support of placing target-audience guidelines on comics is that I've always been in favor of a voluntary information system. Just let parents and retailers know whenever a book enters the landmine fields of sex, violence, language, and nudity. (Yes, nudity and sex are two different things in many parents' eyes.) Then let the retailers and parents judge for themselves. What's not a problem in California or New York might be a big problem in Arkansas, Alabama, or Minnesota.

The main thing I hope to avoid would be a return to the restrictions on the industry that occurred with the third-party Comics Code Authority system. Nowadays, the CCA is nothing but a rubber stamp and nearly meaningless. But in the old days it caused comics to be watered down to pablum. No one wants to see that again.

Hopefully, by exercising responsible marketing in the sale of the now vast variety of comics being made today, that variety can continue to exist — and even increase.

But, as I know first-hand from my fight against the enacted censorship legislation of Arkansas Display Law Act 858: If a legislative body is called on to provide for the protection of children, then its members are going to react without thinking. Of Arkansas legislators, 92% passed that turkey into law without even reading it. They just heard the words, "Protect children from harm." Much the same as what happened to Jesus Castillo in Texas.

The consistent and reliable communication of information could solve so many problems before they happen. Sure, there'll always be nutcases looking to fry someone with their agenda, and comics have historically been an easy target, but, when you've already done your due diligence, you're pretty much Teflon-coated.

I'm glad that Marvel is leading the way by providing more comprehensive target-audience guidelines on their covers. DC does have guidelines to a lesser degree. The people who would most benefit from a universal guidelines system would be the independent publishers, who are in the position of reinventing the wheel to communicate the same information.

The other people who would benefit from consistent guidelines would be the customers — the most important people to the industry. Parents could buy with greater confidence and minimal effort. I know there are those out there who would admonish these parents for their lack of effort. But it only makes sense to make the consumer's job easier. Let them buy with confidence. And a satisfied customer will always buy more.

There are certainly examples within the industry in which creators are unwilling to have anyone evaluate their work. Another element to their resistance possibly comes as a reaction to the restrictiveness of the early Comics Code Authority. There are those who think that comics would be better off without *any* content guidelines.

But that's a dangerous prescription for shrinking the market down to dedicated comic stores only. I operate in a market in which exactly that has already happened and can tell you comics needs more exposure to win more fans and customers. When comics matured, without cover warning, many mistakes were made at bookstores, grocery stores, and even Wal-Mart. As a result, those outlets no longer sell comics.

I have people come in all the time who comment, "I thought they quit making comics," because they never see them anywhere. In the past, comics were everywhere; now, those outlets consider comics unsafe to sell.

Visibility and accessibility are certainly keys to increasing the customer base. Right now, comic books have a lot of visibility, thanks to comics-related movies. I'd probably profit from that visibility more, if there were more opportunities for new customers to discover their first comics. Then, afterward, they might want to seek out a dedicated comics store. As it is now, in Arkansas, they have to seek out my dedicated stores just to get started. That's not an optimal situation; that's missed opportunities. Where comics were once available in thousands of outlets throughout the state, that number is now down to double digits — *low* double digits.

And isn't the comics industry in the business of selling comics? Yeah, it seems like a no-brainer to make comics more accessible and do whatever would help sell more comics.

There's nothing wrong with manufacturing a variety of comics content. Mature readers and mainstream readers alike should be provided a wide selection. Likewise, there is nothing wrong exercising responsible action when doing it. If we don't, we're just providing fuel for the people as in the Castillo case, who are just looking for fires to start.

Help Teflon-coat the industry. Nothing will make us bulletproof, but we can certainly reduce the number of angry parents who thought all comics are made for kids. Make it safe for comics to be carried as a sideline again. And who knows? Maybe we can sell even more comics to the people who thought all comics were made for kids but who want to read more mature material. They just don't know it exists.

It's all about giving customers what they want. Doing that can only sell more comics.

WHY RESIST?

John B. Vorderkunz
Via CBGXtra.com

I don't know every detail to the Jesus Castillo case, but the focus of defense in the case *should* have been that the material in question was located in an Adults Only section of the store — which, if truly and completely separated, would have made the case open and shut.

From a rational perspective, there is no artistic merit to *Demon Beast Invasion: The Fallen* #2 in and of itself. The scenes depicted within that specific issue might have a literarily significant meaning when connected to the series as a whole, but taken alone — as packaged — they merely constitute violent and graphic sex. The "dumb" jury could see that for themselves. Thus, the poorly designed defense mirrored the common comics creator's knee-jerk reaction: "How dare you judge/censor my creative endeavor." All artists seek a reaction; if the sole reaction is undiluted confusion and/or disgust, it's not great art — deal with it, creators. (In most of these cases, you're not smarter or more sophisticated than the public; you just think you are.)

Castillo was certainly convicted unfairly, but that was because he was represented poorly. He didn't decide that tentacle porn was the best vehicle for establishing a theme, so why was his defense based on proving the artistic validity of such? Because too many in the industry seem to have an inferiority complex: "This *is* art, I swear it." The point made within the article is valid and completely cogent here: Art is appreciated on its own merit and not because someone says it should be.

Trying to prove the artistic merit of a Japanese comic featuring tentacle porn to a Texas jury — by the way, I'm a native Texan — is an uphill battle, to say the least. But here in The Lone Star State, porn is sold in gas stations everywhere, *behind the counter.* Obscenity wasn't the issue; availability was. Neither the artistic merits of comics as a medium nor the definition of obscenity was the issue; the marketing of comics was. By defining the case in terms of artistic merit, with such a dubious example, the defense set itself up for an obvious failure.

The idea of a tiered rating system seems so obvious and natural, it's hard to believe that there is resistance to it in the comics industry. Then, again, this is the same industry that put up such a hideous defense for Castillo. Michael makes excellent points. I wish more people in the industry would listen to him.

Maggie: *In 2003, the U.S. Supreme Court denied Castillo's petition for writ of certiorari, and he served a term of unsupervised probation. A dissenting justice in the state appeals court said the state hadn't shown enough evidence that Castillo had had knowledge of the content and character of the comic book.*

LASTKISS COMICS.COM™
BY JOHN LUSTIG
WOW! WATTA FUN BOOK! YOU READ IT RIGHT-TO-LEFT AND IT'S GOT SUCH CUTE ART...
STOP!!
YOU FOOL! IT'S MANGA! IT TURNS WOMEN INTO QUIVERING FANATICS WHO WEAR SHOCKINGLY SHORT, JAPANESE SCHOOL-GIRL UNIFORMS!
NONSENSE! I'D NEVER, UH...
SAY! WHAT COLORS DO THEY COME IN?
06.10.01
©John Lustig 2006
Men, do you know anyone of the female gender? Chances are she's already addicted to manga--and you don't know it! Be prepared! Send for our free Victoria's Ultra-Secret, Sailor Mooned Catalog!

The state prosecutor's closing argument included the statement, "I don't care what type of evidence or what type of testimony is out there, use your rationality, use your common sense. Comic books, traditionally what we think of, are for kids."

CBLDF Board member Neil Gaiman commented, "I think the hardest thing to believe is that Jesus was found guilty of selling an adult comic, from the adult section of the store, to an adult police officer, and convicted because the DA convinced the jury that all comics are really intended for children."

INPUT

Dave Blanchard
*Via **CBGXtra.com***

The real question should be: How much input did Stan Lee have as a writer, editor, and art director of the entire Marvel line?

Did he full-script every story with his byline? No, but, even back in the 1960s, he never claimed he did — although there is some indication he didn't really mind, if the popular press thought he did.

I think some insight into what input Lee had into the Marvel superheroes of the 1960s can be gleaned by comparing his work on *Fantastic Four* (Kirby), *Amazing Spider-Man* (Ditko and then John Romita), *Silver Surfer* (Sal Buscema), *Daredevil* (Gene Colan), *Iron Man* (Don Heck and Colan), and various other series he wrote with other artists. In every single one of them, you can "hear" Stan's voice — and not just as the person putting words in the dialogue balloons.

Maggie: *The problem here is with the word "writing." As a one-man writer-editor in a full line of many titles, Stan evolved a production-line process that gave him control over the line while delegating creative duties to a staff of others.*

So stories were handled in increments beginning with story sessions with artists, "How about a threat from outer space next issue?" or something more detailed, depending on the artist, the development Stan was working toward, and the month-to-month situation. The artist would then do thumbnails (or even more detailed work), there'd be another conference or so, and the artist (sometimes, a different artist) would then provide finished pencils. Kirby, for example, would pencil suggested dialogue on the page. Stan then wrote a complete script, which was then inked on the page by the letterer. Then it went to the inker, who finished the job. So who wrote it? The guy who rough-plotted it, the guy who fine-plotted it and laid it out, the guy who scripted it?

That's the "Marvel method," used by some to this day.

Brent: *See Captain Comics' interview with Stan on **Page 24** for more on the creative process.*

A GOLDEN CROSSOVER?

Will Edelman
3023 W. 75th St.
Los Angeles, CA 90043

With regard to Golden Age crossovers, does this count?

In *Top-Notch Comics* #5 (May 40), The Wizard has a premonition of the Mosconians' plot to attack Pearl Harbor (Apr 40).

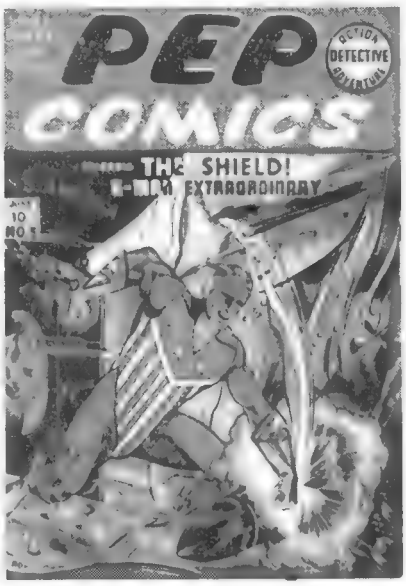
In *Pep* #4 (May 40), he tips off the FBI and tells The Shield the location of the Mosconians' headquarters.

In *Top Notch Comics* #6 (Jun 40), The Wizard continues fighting the Mosconians.

In *Pep* #5 (Jun 40), The Wizard gives The Shield his strato-plane to help defeat the Mosconians.

The Wizard's appearances in the Shield stories are only cameos and the stories are not serialized. Nevertheless, the two heroes are fighting the same villains in connected stories, appearing in different titles.

This information and some of the stories appear in *America's First Patriotic Superhero, The Shield* (2002).



BUMPKIN BUZZ

EPISODE 9.06

SUPER-HERO CIVIL WAR PART 2

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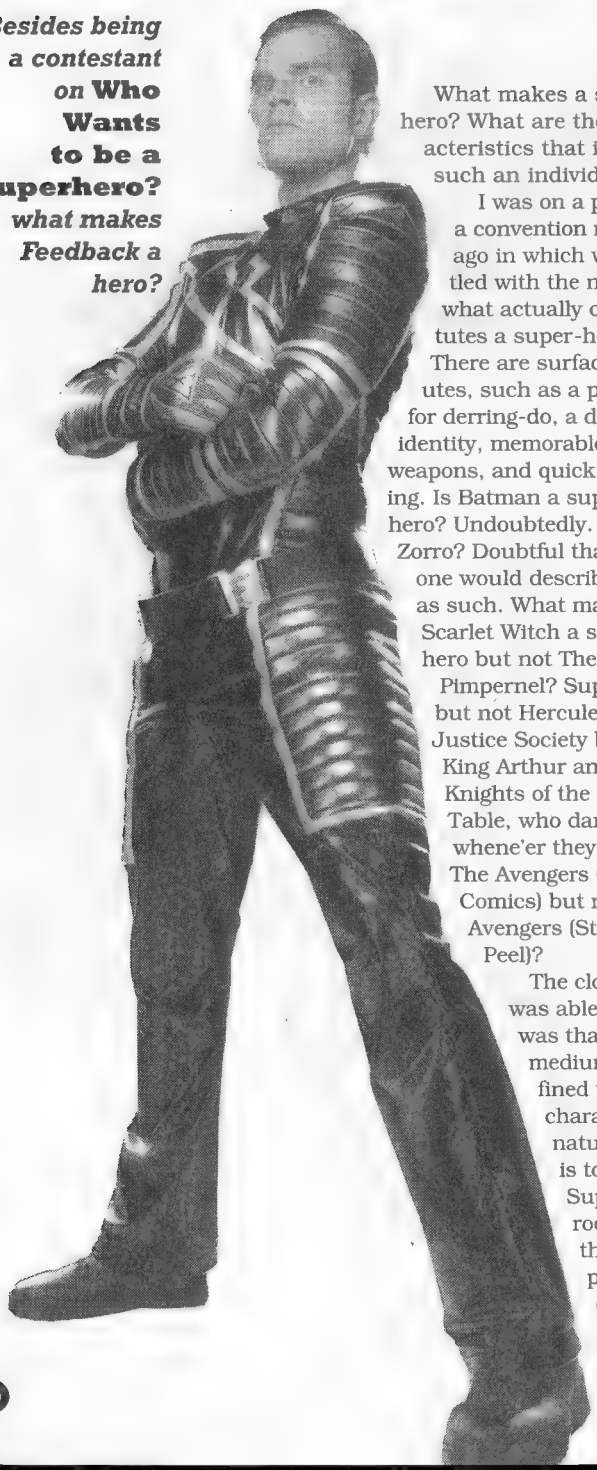
WHEN LAST WE LEFT OUR HEROES, INSECT INDIVIDUAL REVEALED TO THE WORLD THAT HE WAS IN FACT PETROY PARKFRON!
THE BACKLASH AT THE SUPER-HERO CAFETERIA WAS TREMENDOUS!
NO, NO, NO! NOOOOO! YOUR TRUE FACE YOU MUST NOT SHOW!
DON'T PUT A TWIST IN THE PLOT YOU'LL SOON WISH YOU HAD NOT--DON'T MESS WITH THE FLOW, NO-NOOO!
STICK TO THE STATUS QUO!!
IRONING BOARD, THRILLED TO HAVE AN ALLY WHOSE COMIC SOLD BETTER THAN HIS, GAVE PETROY A HIDEOUS NEW COSTUME!
WHY DID THEY LET THEMSELVES BELIEVE A BAD ORIGIN WOULD HELP ME ??
BECAUSE I LIKED THE SCORE, WHEN MY BACKSTORY WAS IGNORED!
BETTE-LEE REWRITTEN WAS INSPIRED TO PINE ABOUT HER OWN REVAMPS!
WITH INSECTY AT HIS SIDE, IRONING BOARD LAUNCHED AN AMBUSH ON SPANGLED STAR AND HIS IDENTITY-HOARDING COMPATRIOTS!
BOP, WHOP, THWOP--
--BOP 'TIL THEY DROP!
TAKE THEIR RIGHTS AND RIP THAT MASK OFF!
BUT!! TRAGEDY STRUCK!
THEY KILLED JAZZ SQUARE!
B-BUT HE WAS A CROWD FAVORITE! EVERYBODY LOVES A GOOD JAZZ SQUARE!
OUR HEROES KNEW WHAT THEY MUST DO! CONTRIVE TO GET THE OPPOSING SIDES TOGETHER--
--SO A SONG COULD TOUCH THEIR HEARTS!
WE'RE SOARING, WALL CRAWLIN', THERE'S NOT A LAST-MINUTE RESCUE THAT WE CAN'T SEE!
NOT A HOAX! NOT A DREAM! NOT AN ALTERNATE SCENE! BOTH OF US-- BREAKIN' FREE--!
AND IT WORKED! A HIGH SCHOOL BAND SUDDENLY APPEARED TO CELEBRATE THE HEROES UNITED!!
TOGETHER... FOREVER... TOGETHER... EV'RYONE!
TOGETHER... TOGETHER...
C'MON LET'S MAKE COMICS FUN!!
ANIMOSITIES ARE SET ASIDE, CIVIL LIBERTIES ARE PROTECTED, AND THERE'S FRIENDSHIP AND HAPPINESS--
BUZZ!
SNAP OUT OF IT! NICE AS THAT SOUNDS, THE REALITY IS...
I HATE YOU!!
I HATE YOU MORE!
-BRIZ
EH. ACCEPTING DUAL IDENTITIES, RECOGNIZING PAST MISTAKES, WORKING TOGETHER--
--I GUESS THERE'S JUST NO AUDIENCE FOR THAT TODAY.

Defining a genre

What makes a hero heroic?

***Besides being a contestant on* Who Wants to be a Superhero?**
what makes Feedback a hero?



by PETER DAVID

What makes a super-hero? What are the characteristics that identify such an individual?

I was on a panel at a convention not long ago in which we wrestled with the notion of what actually constitutes a super-hero. There are surface attributes, such as a proclivity for derring-do, a double identity, memorable weapons, and quick thinking. Is Batman a super-hero? Undoubtedly. But is Zorro? Doubtful that anyone would describe him as such. What makes The Scarlet Witch a super-hero but not The Scarlet Pimpernel? Superman but not Hercules? The Justice Society but not King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table, who dance whene'er they're able? The Avengers (Marvel Comics) but not the Avengers (Steed and Peel)?

The closest I was able to come was that the medium defined the character's nature. That is to say: Super-heroes are the province of the comic book or comic strip. The fact that a character's origins are rooted in comics rather than in, say, mythology or literature is what makes him a super-hero. That means Doc Savage and The Shadow, for instance, are not super-heroes but, rather, pulp heroes. Granted, it kind of leaves The Green Hornet out in the cold. By every surface trapping, he is indistinguishable from Batman, who is obviously a super-hero. Yet, since he originated, not in comics, but in radio, technically — by my arbitrary definition — he wouldn't be a super-hero. Then, again, that might explain why all of his forays outside his natural medium of radio have been less than super-heroic successes (Bruce Lee's subsequent fame notwithstanding).

The producers of the new TV series *Heroes* even seem to understand or acknowledge that. Since they're effectively producing a super-hero series that didn't spring from comic books, they've contrived a comic-book connection. The character of Hiro, an innocuous Japanese executive who discovers that he can affect the space-time continuum, not only bases his philosophies on *Spider-Man* and *X-Men*, but winds up in possession of a future comic book of which he is the star and that serves as a roadmap for his actions. My purely unscientific straw poll of fan reactions and critical reviews cite Hiro as the breakout character. Why? Because giving Hiro comic-book origins, even though they're manufactured, puts him squarely in the viewers' comfort zone.

But mere presence in a comic book isn't enough to constitute being a super-hero, either. No one in his right mind would call *Sin City's* "Marv" a super-hero. Nor are the residents of *Strangers in Paradise* or *Bone.* Nor is Dick Tracy a super-hero, despite his comic-strip origins and some of the more outré aspects of his world, such as flying garbage cans, wrist-video units, and Moon Maid — and an assortment of grotesque villains that make The Flash's Rogues' Gallery look like the Laker girls. (Although, as an aside, I'll note that IDW has published a gorgeous

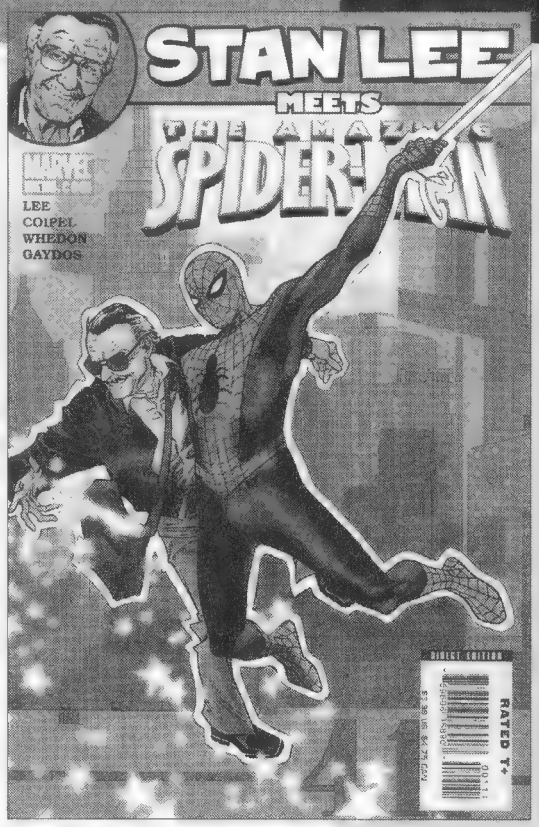
hardcover collection of the first couple of years' worth of *Dick Tracy*. The book features an introduction by Max Allan Collins, and it's fascinating to see the strip's early years, as it finds its footing and takes the first tentative steps on its way toward being an American icon. If you haven't picked it up, you really should.)

I think the most aggressive endeavor to define what makes up a super-hero was The Sci-Fi Channel limited series *Who Wants to be a Superhero*. Masterminded by no less an authority on the subject than Stan "The Man" Lee, *Superhero* (airing July 27-Aug. 31) gathered an assortment of, basically, ambitious LARPers who created super-heroic personas for themselves complete with powers and abilities far beyond those of mortal men — and, presumably, beyond the players themselves, considering we never actually saw them display any of said abilities. The grand prize was to be immortalized in the pages of a Dark Horse comic book starring that character. But that paled next to the *real* goal: to win the approval of Stan himself.

Throughout the series, the would-be heroes were put through a series of tests of character, determining whether they had the super-right stuff. In the course of each episode, one or two would be informed they had to discard their costume in a garbage bin, as anyone who ever read *Amazing Spider-Man #50* (or saw *Spider-Man 2*) will tell you is the accepted means of making clear that you're out of the super-hero game. Their fates were not decided by a trio of judges in various states of comprehensibility. (A general question I will put out about Little Richard: WTF?) No, the sole arbiter, the court of last resort, the Grand Inquisitor and Unquestioned Master of his super-hero domain, was Stan himself, rendering his decisions on who stayed and who went via a monitor screen. All-seeing, all-knowing, avuncular but firm — like a combination of Big Brother and Santa Claus.

What I found the most intriguing about the decisions Stan made was that the criteria upon which he based them seemed almost alien to much of what passes for comic books in the current market.

For instance, one test involved the heroes cooling their heels in a restaurant while awaiting a take-out order: a pedestrian-enough assignment for a super-hero. Kind of like inviting Thor over so he can use his hammer to hang a picture. But the hidden danger was that the waiters and waitresses made small talk with the heroes and, in the course of doing so, asked them their real names. Several of them obligingly served up their true identities, and Stan subsequently slapped them down for it. "A hero," he intoned, "never gives up his or her secret identity," a philosophy — it should be noted — firmly shared by Elasti-Girl of *The Incredibles*. (And, yes, they're super-heroes, and, no, they didn't originate in comics, but shut up, we're past that point in the column.) The ironic aspect was the timing: Even as Stan underscored the importance of keeping one's i.d. under wraps, his best-known creation was busy revealing to the world that he was Peter Parker.



In fact, secret identities are rapidly becoming passé in the super-hero realm, with *Civil War* simply being the logical evolution of that trend. Then, again, one could also point out that readers are becoming passé. So it's entirely possible that Stan might have a valid point.

Stan also remonstrated with one hero, Major Victory, for removing his cape and tossing it over a puddle that was in the path of a female pedestrian. Although The Major was obviously endeavoring to evoke the gallantry of Sir Walter Raleigh covering up a puddle to accommodate Queen Elizabeth, Stan asserted that a hero never disrobes. This, of course, is an odd thing for the creator of *Stripperella* to say. But Stan's larger point was, I think, that super-heroes should be bastions of morality and proper conduct. I think nudists might take issue with the notion that merely removing one's clothes in public is inherently immoral. Then, again, there are not, to my knowledge, nudist super-heroes (although nature-loving Storm comes close), which is a shame, since such a book would probably sell a ton. One can point out, though, that various heroes seem to doff their ensembles with regularity (Starfire comes to mind), and the fans don't seem to mind. In fact, those issues probably sell more.

I suppose what it comes down to is that the recurring point Stan made through the series was that heroes are supposed to stand for the best of what we can be: Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts in tights. Individuals whose costumes and actions stand for more than superpowered dust-ups and huge fight scenes: They're in-

Secret identities are rapidly becoming passé in the super-hero realm, with *Civil War* simply being the logical evolution of that trend.

tended to be that which we can aspire to in order to be better human beings.

Sadly, the series fell short of its own aspirations. (***Spoiler Warning:*** *If you haven't watched the series yet, Peter reveals most of the outcome in the following paragraphs.*) In the penultimate episode, the remaining heroes of Fat Momma, Major Victory, and Feedback were given two challenges: first, to tell a discerning group of elementary school students about themselves; second, to solve a puzzle that would take them through a mall at Universal Studios in time to stop a villain threatening the public welfare. Fat Momma was the biggest hit with the kids, while Major Victory found the bad guy fastest, with Feedback a close second.

Yet, astoundingly, Major Victory was given the heave-ho. Fat Momma should have been the obvious choice to go, because, not only did she take three times as long as anyone else to find the villain (close to an hour), she stopped to crib French fries and get a backrub along the way. That's how seriously she took her challenge of protecting innocent people from harm — and isn't that supposed to be the goal of being a super-hero in the first place? Presumably, the rationale was that she was kept around because she was a favorite of the kids. Except the kids adored her for all the wrong reasons: She's an obese woman who said it's OK to be fat as long as you feel good about yourself and she had donuts hanging from her belt. Now, sure, good self-esteem is important. But, in a nation in which childhood obesity and juvenile diabetes are huge concerns, do we really want to be telling kids that it's OK to stuff their faces with sweets as long as they have a good self-image?

I have to think that Major Victory's ouster was motivated less by who was the most fit to be a super-hero and more by the concern that the producers didn't want the final episode to come down to choosing between two square-jawed, clean-cut white guys. (***End Spoiler Warning.***)

Heroes protected life and they stood for the exact sorts of ideals in which Stan's TV show reveled. Now, that no longer seems to be the case.

That said, the show nevertheless underscored that which seems to be missing in much of what appears in super-hero comics today. In fact, the upright, square-jawed persona of super-heroes as depicted in the show seemed more evocative of the Adam West *Batman* TV series, which most fans revile as hokey and campy. Yet in those days, comics sold a lot more, and super-heroes ...

... they made you feel good about yourself.

That's what's lacking in many depictions of super-heroes today, I think, which is where the vast divide is between real people who want to be super-heroes as opposed to fictional people who are super-heroes. The latter used to make you feel good about yourself. They protected life and they stood for the exact sorts of ideals in which Stan's TV show reveled. Now, that no longer seems to be the case, and even Stan tacitly acknowledged that in his own *Stan Lee Meets Spider-Man*. In that memorable one-shot, Spider-Man is having one of his classic "What's the point of it all, maybe I should just quit" moments and goes to his creator for counsel.

Does Stan attempt to turn him around in his thinking by extolling all the virtues of Spidey's selfless acts? Nope. Instead, he informs Spider-Man that of course he can't quit, because Spidey's a huge commercial property with many people depending on him to keep their careers afloat. Spidey promptly snaps off a salute, acknowledges the truth of Stan's words, and swings back into action. The attitude expressed may come across as cynical and snarky, but it's also bitingly accurate. Spider-Man can't ever quit being Spider-Man, *not* because of his dedication to Uncle Ben, but because Marvel isn't going to stop publishing Spider-Man, so everything else is just rationalization.

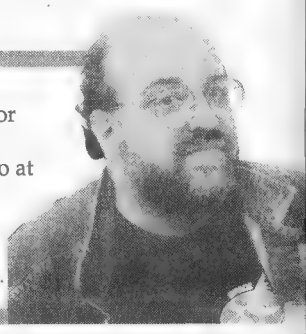
The question isn't so much *who* wants to be a super-hero as much as *why* someone would want to be. On TV, it seems, it's out of a sense of destiny or to try to be immortalized in a comic book or just to make the world a better place. In comic books, on the other hand, super-heroes seem mostly to be fighting for their own survival and doing whatever it takes — stripping, killing, cursing up a blue streak, whatever. I'm not even sure what most of them stand for any more ... and, more to the point, many of them don't seem to be, either. And, if any of them *do* stand for the attributes that are as clear-cut as depicted on television, many readers would view them as quaint or out of touch. We smile at the devoted do-gooder mentality of a Major Victory or a Feedback, because we know that, in a confrontation, Wolverine would cut them to shreds, while the Adam West Batman would be slapped into oblivion by the comic-book Caped Crusader.

How silly, it seems, for super-heroes to be good and upstanding and highly moral and ... and ... fun.

Where do super-heroes get off being fun?

When was that ever in the mix?

Back in the old days, I guess — when a lot more people were reading comic books than they are now.



PETER DAVID, writer of stuff, has written *But I Digress* for *CBG* since #871 in 1990.

Peter David can be written to at P.O. Box 239, Bayport, NY 11705 or at **padguy@aol.com.** But why would you want to?

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AHEM.
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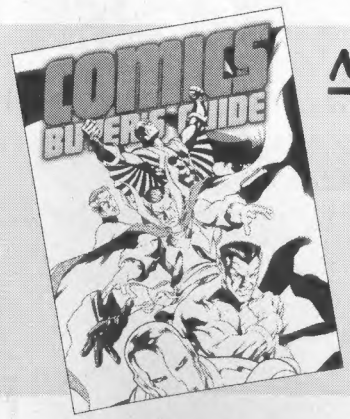

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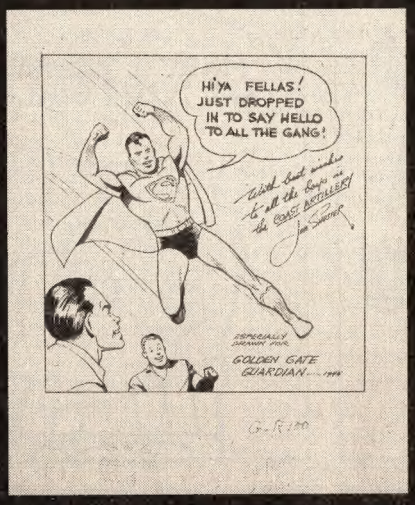

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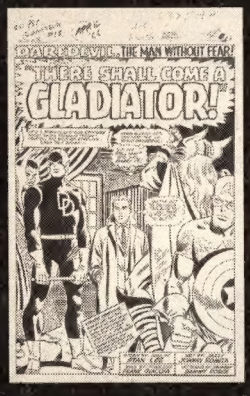

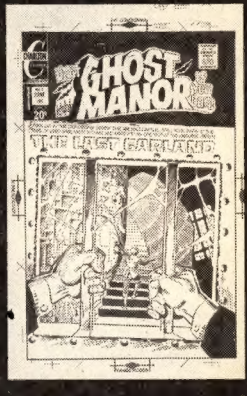

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Pcode		
XCC200	2	$ 12.70
	5	28.40
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Holds up to 200 comics.

LONG COMIC

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Pcode		
XLC300	2	$ 16.40
	5	35.80
	10	71.20
	25	142.90
	50	189.90+frt
	100	335.40+frt

Holds up to 300 comics.

MAGAZINE

9 x 11-1/2 x 15

Pcode		
XMAG150	2	$ 15.60
	5	35.80
Holds up to 150 Magazines	25	127.50
	50	230.00
	100	338.10+frt

Also use for golden age comics & folded one sheets.

LIFE MAGAZINE

11-1/2 x 14-3/4 x 15-3/4

Pcode		
XLM60	2	$ 17.10
	5	37.00
	25	136.60
	50	238.50
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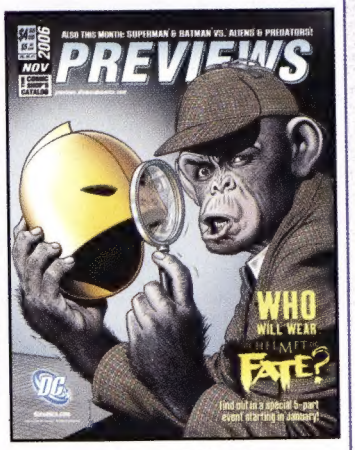
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DC

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Image

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